BELL'S EDITION.

The POETS of GREAT BRITAIN

COMPLETE FROM

CHAUCER to CHURCHILL.

PRIOR VOLUME III.

Love had ordain'd that it was Abra's turn
To mix the Sweets and minister the Urn.

Page 2.

Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange Strand London August 1. 1777.

BRITISH MUSEUM

P

MA

WIT

Here's n
Here all
No forc
No mud
With fu
As light
Gentle,
Rapid, y

AT TH

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

MATTHEW PRIOR.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

Here's no rude ore; no fits of heat and cold:
Here all is nature, yet all's beaten gold;
No forc'd myſterious ſoarings in the clouds;
No mud, no foam, no noiſe, in your deep floods.
With ſuch true ſpirit your great numbers run,
As lightning bold, but equal as the ſun:
Gentle, tho' ſtrong; and high, yet ſtill in ſight;
Rapid, yet pure; and eaſy as the light. VERSES TO PRIOR.

VOL. III.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Preſs, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1777.

BRITISH MUSEUM

M

SOLOMO

ALMA.

AT T

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

MATTHEW PRIOR.

VOL. III.

CONTAINING HIS

SOLOMON. THREE BOOKS,	NUT-BROWN MAID,
ALMA. THREE CANTOS,	HENRY AND EMMA,

&c. &c. &c.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Preſs, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1777.

BRITISH MUSEUM

It is h
tolerab
pleafed
made o
defire t
his own
is hard
author
are his
fcendin
come a
ing too
upon hi
fation.
grant, i
with a

SOLOMON

ON THE

VANITY OF THE WORLD.

A POEM. IN THREE BOOKS.

PREFACE.

It is hard for a man to ſpeak of himſelf with any tolerable ſatisfaction or ſucceſs: he can be no more pleaſed in blaming himſelf, than in reading a ſatire made on him by another; and though he may juſtly deſire that a friend ſhould praiſe him, yet if he makes his own panegyric, he will get very few to read it. It is harder for him to ſpeak of his own writings. An author is in the condition of a culprit; the public are his judges: by allowing too much, and condeſcending too far, he may injure his own cauſe, and become a kind of *felo de ſe;* and by pleading and aſſerting too boldly, he may diſpleaſe the court that ſits upon him: his apology may only heighten his accuſation. I would avoid theſe extremes; and though, I grant, it would not be very civil to trouble the reader with a long preface before he enters upon an indiffe-

rent poem, I would ſay ſomething to perſuade him to take as it is, or to excuſe it for not being better.

The noble images and reflections, the profound reaſonings upon human actions, and excellent precepts for the government of life, which are found in the Proverbs, Eccleſiaſtes, and other books commonly attributed to Solomon, afford ſubjects for finer poems in every kind than have, I think, as yet appeared in the Greek, Latin, or any modern language: how far they were verſe in their original, is a diſſertation not to be entered into at preſent.

Out of this great treaſure, which lies heaped up together in a confuſed magnificence, above all order, I had a mind to collect and digeſt ſuch obſervations and apothegms as moſt particularly tend to the proof of that great aſſertion, laid down in the beginning of the Eccleſiaſtes, All is vanity.

Upon the ſubject thus choſen, ſuch various images preſent themſelves to a writer's mind, that he muſt find it eaſier to judge what ſhould be rejected, than what ought to be received. The difficulty lies in drawing and diſpoſing, or (as the painters term it) in grouping ſuch a multitude of different objects, preſerving ſtill the juſtice and conformity of ſtyle and colouring, the *ſimplex duntaxat et unum* which Horace preſcribes as requiſite to make the whole picture beautiful and perfect.

As precept, however true in theory, or uſeful in practice, would be but dry and tedious in verſe, eſpecially if the recital be long, I found it neceſſary to form ſome ſtory, and give a kind of body to the Poem. Under what ſpecies it may be comprehended, whether Didaſcalic or Heroic, I leave to the judgment of the critics, deſiring them to be favourable in their cenſure, and not ſolicitous what the Poem is called, provided it may be accepted.

The chief perſonage or character in the Epic is always proportioned to the deſign of the work, to carry on the narration and the moral. Homer intended to ſhew us, in his Iliad, that diſſentions amongſt great men obſtruct the execution of the nobleſt enterprizes, and tend to the ruin of a ſtate or kingdom. His Achilles, therefore, is haughty and paſſionate, impatient of any reſtraint by laws, and arrogant in arms. In his Odyſſes the ſame poet endeavours to explain, that the hardeſt difficulties may be overcome by labour, and our fortune reſtored after the ſevereſt afflictions. Ulyſſes, therefore, is valiant, virtuous, and patient. Virgil's deſign was to tell us how, from a ſmall colony eſtabliſhed by the Trojans in Italy, the Roman empire roſe, and from what ancient families Auguſtus (who was his prince and patron) deſcended. His hero, therefore, was to fight his way to the throne, ſtill diſtinguiſhed and protected by the favour

of the gods. The poet, to this end, takes off from the vices of Achilles, and adds to the virtues of Ulyſſes, from both perfecting a character proper for his work in the perſon of Æneas.

As Virgil copied after Homer, other Epic poets have copied after them both. Taſſo's *Gieruſalemme Liberata* is directly Troy town ſacked, with this difference only, that the two chief characters in Homer, which the Latin poet had joined in one, the Italian has ſeparated in his Godfrey and Rinaldo; but he makes them both carry on his work with very great ſucceſs. Ronſard's *Franciade*, (incomparably good as far as it goes) is again Virgil's Æneis. His hero comes from a foreign country, ſettles a colony, and lays the foundation of a future empire. I inſtance in theſe as the greateſt Italian and French poets in the Epic. In our language Spenſer has not contented himſelf with this ſubmiſſive manner of imitation; he launches out into very flowery paths, which ſtill ſeem to conduct him into one great road. His Fairy Queen (had it been finiſhed) muſt have ended in the account which every knight was to give of his adventures, and in the accumulated praiſes of his heroine Gloriana. The whole would have been an heroic poem, but in another caſt and figure than any that had ever been written before. Yet it is obſervable that every hero (as far as we can judge by the Books ſtill remaining) bears

his diſtinguiſhed character, and repreſents ſome particular virtue conducive to the whole deſign.

To bring this to our preſent ſubject. The pleaſures of life do not compenſate the miſeries: age ſteals upon us unawares, and death, as the only cure of our ills, ought to be expected, but not feared. This inſtruction is to be illuſtrated by the action of ſome great perſon. Who, therefore, more proper for the buſineſs than Solomon himſelf? And why may he not be ſuppoſed now to repeat what, we take it for granted, he acted almoſt three thouſand years ſince? If, in the fair ſituation where this prince was placed, he was acquainted with ſorrow; if, endowed with the greateſt perfections of Nature, and poſſeſſed of all the advantages of external condition, he could not find happineſs, the reſt of mankind may ſafely take the Monarch's word for the truth of what he aſſerts. And the author who would perſuade that we ſhould bear the ills of life patiently, merely becauſe Solomon felt the ſame, has a better argument than Lucretius had, when, in his imperious way, he at once convinces and commands that we ought to ſubmit to death without ripining becauſe Epicurus died.

The whole Poem is a ſoliloquy: Solomon is the perſon that ſpeaks: he is at once the hero and the author; but he tells us very often what others ſay to him. Thoſe chiefly introduced are his Rabbies and Philoſo-

phers in the Firſt book, and his Women and their Attendants in the Second: with theſe the Sacred hiſtory mention him to have converſed, as likewiſe with the angel brought down, in the Third book, to help him out of his difficulties, or at leaſt to teach him how to overcome them.

Nec Deus interſit niſi dignus vindice nodus.

I preſume this poetical liberty may be very juſtly allowed me on ſo ſolemn an occaſion.

In my deſcription I have endeavoured to keep to the notions and manners of the Jewiſh nation at the time when Solomon lived; and where I allude to the cuſtoms of the Greeks, I believe I may be juſtified by the ſtricteſt chronology, though a poet is not obliged to the rules that confine an hiſtorian. Virgil has anticipated two hundred years, or the Trojan hero and Carthaginian queen could not have been brought together: and without the ſame anachroniſm ſeveral of the fineſt parts of his Æneis muſt have been omitted. Our countryman, Milton, goes yet further: he takes up many of his material images ſome thouſands of years after the fall of man; nor could he otherwiſe have written, or we read, one of the ſublimeſt pieces of invention that was ever yet produced. This likewiſe takes off the objection that ſome names of countries, terms of art, and notions in natural philoſophy, are otherwiſe expreſſed than can be warranted by the geography or

aſtronomy of Solomon's time. Poets are allowed the ſame liberty in their deſcriptions and compariſons, as painters in their draperies and ornaments: their perſonages may be dreſſed not exactly in the ſame habits which they wore, but in ſuch as make them appear moſt graceful. In this caſe probability muſt atone for the want of truth. This liberty has indeed been abuſed by eminent maſters in either ſcience. Raphael and Taſſo have ſhewed their diſcretion, where Paul Veroneſe and Arioſto are to anſwer for their extravagancies. It is the exceſs, not the thing itſelf, that is blameable.

I would ſay one word of the meaſure in which this and moſt poems of the age are written. Heroic, with continued rhyme, as Donne and his contemporaries uſed it, carrying the ſenſe of one verſe moſt commonly into another, was found too diſſolute and wild, and came very often too near proſe. As Davenant and Waller corrected, and Dryden perfected it, it is too confined: it cuts off the ſenſe at the end of every firſt line, which muſt always rhyme to the next following, and, conſequently, produces too frequent an identity in the ſound, and brings every couplet to the point of an epigram. It is indeed too broken and weak to convey the ſentiments and repreſent the images proper for Epic; and as it tires the writer while he compoſes, it muſt do the ſame to the reader while he repeats, eſpecially in a poem of any conſiderable length.

If ſtriking out into blank verſe, as Milton did, (and in this kind Mr. Philips, had he lived, would have excelled) or running the thought into alternate and ſtanza, which allows a greater variety, and ſtill preſerves the dignity of the verſe, as Spenſer and Fairfax have done; if either of theſe, I ſay, be a proper remedy for my poetical complaint, or if any other may be found, I dare not determine; I am only inquiring in order to be better informed, without preſuming to direct the judgment of others: and while I am ſpeaking of the verſe itſelf, I give all juſt praiſe to many of my friends, now living, who have in Epic carried the harmony of their numbers as far as the nature of this meaſure will permit: but, once more, he that writes in rhymes dances in fetters; and as his chain is more extended, he may certainly take larger ſteps.

I need make no apology for the ſhort digreſſive panegyric upon Great Britain in the Firſt book: I am glad to have it obſerved that there appears throughout all my verſes a zeal for the honour of my country; and I had rather be thought a good Engliſhman, than the beſt poet or greateſt ſcholar that ever wrote.

And now as to the publiſhing of this Piece; though I have in a literal ſenſe obſerved Horace's *Nonum prematur in annum*, yet have I by no means obeyed our poetical lawgiver according to the ſpirit of the pre-

cept. The Poem has indeed been written and laid aſide much longer than the term preſcribed; but in the mean time I had little leiſure, and leſs inclination, to reviſe or print it. The frequent interruptions I have met with in my private ſtudies, and great variety of public life in which I have been employed, my thoughts (ſuch as they are) having generally been expreſſed in foreign language, and even formed by a habitude very different from what the beauty and elegance of Engliſh poetry requires; all theſe, and ſome other circumſtances, which we had as good paſs by at preſent, do juſtly contribute to make my excuſe in this behalf very plauſible. Far, indeed, from deſigning to print, I had locked up theſe papers in my 'ſcritoire, there to lie in peace till my executors might have taken them out. What altered this deſign, or how my 'ſcritoire came to be unlocked before my coffin was nailed, is the queſtion. The true reaſon I take to be the beſt; many of my friends of the firſt quality, fineſt learning, and greateſt underſtanding, have wreſted the key from my hands by a very kind and irreſiſtible violence; and the Poem is publiſhed not without my conſent indeed, but a little againſt my opinion, and with an implicit ſubmiſſion to the partiality of their judgment. As I give up here the fruits of many of my vacant hours to their amuſement and pleaſure, I ſhall always think myſelf happy if I may dedicate my moſt

ſerious endeavours to their intereſt and ſervice: and I am proud to finiſh this Preface by ſaying, that the violence of many enemies, whom I never juſtly offended, is abundantly recompenſed by the goodneſs of more friends, whom I can never ſufficiently oblige: and if I here aſſume the liberty of mentioning my Lord Harley and Lord Bathurſt as the authors of this amicable confederacy, among all thoſe whoſe names do me great honour in the beginning of my book *, theſe two only ought to be angry with me; for I diſobey their poſitive order, whilſt I make even this ſmall acknowledgment of their particular kindneſs.

* The folio edition of 1718, to which is prefixed a moſt numerous liſt of honourable and celebrated names as ſubſcribers.

KNOWLEDGE.

BOOK I.

TEXTS CHIEFLY ALLUDED TO IN THIS BOOK.

THE words of the Preacher, the ſon of David, king of Jeruſalem, Eccleſ. chap. i. *ver.* 1.

Vanity of vanities, ſaith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity, ver. 2.

I communed with mine own heart, ſaying, Lo, I am come to great eſtate, and have gotten more wiſdom than all they that have been before me in Jeruſalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wiſdom and knowledge, ver. 16.

He ſpake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyſſop that ſpringeth out of the wall: he ſpake alſo of beaſts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fiſhes, 1 *Kings, chap.* iv. *ver.* 33.

I know that whatſoever God doeth, it ſhall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men ſhould fear before him, Eccleſ. chap. iii. *ver.* 14.

He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: alſo he hath ſet the world in their heart; ſo that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end, Eccleſ. chap. iii. *ver.* 11.

For in much wiſdom is much grief: and he that increaſeth knowledge, increaſeth ſorrow, chap. i. *ver.* 18.

And further, by theſe, my ſon, be admoniſhed: of making many books there is no end: and much ſtudy is a wearineſs of the fleſh, chap. xii. *ver.* 12.

SOLOMON, &c.

KNOWLEDGE.

BOOK I.

Ὁ Βίος γὰρ ὄνομ' ἔχει, πόνος δ' ἔργῳ πέλει. Eurip.

Siquis Deus mihi largiatur, ut ex hac aetate repueraſcam, et in cunis vagiam, valde recuſem. Cic. de Senect.

The bewailing of man's miſeries hath been elegantly and copiouſly ſet forth by many, in the writings as well of philoſophers as divines, and it is both a pleaſant and a profitable contemplation.

Lord Bacon's Advancement of Learning.

The Argument.

Solomon, ſeeking happineſs from knowledge, convenes the learned men of his kingdom; requires them to explain to him the various operations and effects of Nature; diſcourſes of vegetables, animals, and man; propoſes ſome queſtions concerning the origin and ſituation of the habitable earth; proceeds to examine the ſyſtem of the viſible heaven; doubts if there may not be a plurality of worlds; inquires into the nature of ſpirits and angels; and wiſhes to be more fully informed as to the attributes of the Supreme Being. He is imperfectly anſwered by the Rabbins and Doctors; blames his own curioſity; and concludes that, as to human ſcience, ALL IS VANITY.

Ye ſons of men, with juſt regard attend,
Obſerve the Preacher, and believe the friend,
Whoſe ſerious Muſe inſpires him to explain
That all we act and all we think is vain:

That in this pilgrimage of ſeventy years,
O'er rocks of perils and thro' vales of tears
Deſtin'd to march, our doubtful ſteps we tend,
Tir'd with the toil, yet fearful of its end:
That from the womb we take our fatal ſhares
Of follies, paſſions, labours, tumults, cares;
And at approach of death ſhall only know
The truths which from theſe penſive numbers flow,
That we purſue falſe joy and ſuffer real woe.

Happineſs! object of that waking dream
Which we call Life, miſtaking: fugitive theme
Of my purſuing verſe; ideal ſhade,
Notional good; by fancy only made,
And by tradition nurs'd; fallacious fire,
Whoſe dancing beams miſlead our fond deſire;
Cauſe of our care, and error of our mind;
Oh! hadſt thou ever been by Heav'n deſign'd
To Adam, and his mortal race, the boon
Entire had been reſerv'd for Solomon;
On me the partial lot had been beſtow'd,
And in my cup the golden draught had flow'd.

But, O! ere yet orig'nal man was made,
Ere the foundations of this earth were laid,
It was opponent to our ſearch ordain'd,
That joy, ſtill ſought, ſhould never be attain'd:
This ſad experience cites me to reveal,
And what I dictate is from what I feel.

Born, as I was, great David's fav'rite ſon,
Dear to my people on the Hebrew throne,

Sublime my court with Ophir's treaſures bleſt,
My name extended to the fartheſt Eaſt,
My body cloth'd with ev'ry outward grace,
Strength in my limbs, and beauty in my face,
My ſhining thought with fruitful notions crown'd,
Quick my invention, and my judgment ſound;
Ariſe (I commun'd with myſelf) ariſe,
Think to be happy; to be great be wiſe;
Content of ſpirit muſt from ſcience flow,
For 'tis a godlike attribute to know.
I ſaid, and ſent my edict thro' the land;
Around my throne the letter'd Rabbins ſtand;
Hiſtoric leaves revolve, long volumes ſpread,
The old diſcourſing as the younger read;
Attent I heard, propos'd my doubts, and ſaid;
The vegetable world, each plant and tree,
Its ſeed, its name, its nature, its degree,
I am allow'd, as Fame reports, to know,
From the fair cedar on the craggy brow
Of Lebanon nodding ſupremely tall,
To creeping moſs, and hyſſop on the wall;
Yet juſt and conſcious to myſelf, I find
A thouſand doubts oppoſe the ſearching mind.
I know not why the beach delights the glade,
With boughs extended and a rounder ſhade,
Whilſt tow'ring firs in conic forms ariſe,
And with a pointed ſpear divide the ſkies;

Nor why, again, the changing oak ſhould ſhed
The yearly honour of his ſtately head,
Whilſt the diſtinguiſh'd yew is ever ſeen
Unchang'd his branch, and permanent his green;
Wanting the ſun why does the caltha fade?
Why does the cypreſs flouriſh in the ſhade?
The fig and date, why love they to remain
In middle ſtation, and an even plain,
While in the lower marſh the gourd is found,
And while the hill with olive-ſhade is crown'd?
Why does one climate and one ſoil endue
The bluſhing poppy with a crimſon hue,
Yet leave the lily pale, and tinge the violet blue?
Why does the fond carnation love to ſhoot
A various colour from one parent root,
While the fantaſtic tulip ſtrives to break
In two-fold beauty and a parted ſtreak?
The twining jaſmine and the bluſhing roſe,
With laviſh grace their morning ſcents diſcloſe;
The ſmelling tub'roſe and jonquil declare,
The ſtronger impulſe of an evening air.
Whence has the tree (reſolve me) or the flow'r
A various inſtinct or a diff'rent pow'r? [breath,
Why ſhould one earth, one clime, one ſtream, one
Raiſe this to ſtrength, and ſicken that to death?

Whence does it happen that the plant which well
We name the ſenſitive, ſhould move and feel?

Whence know her leaves to anſwer her command,
And with quick horror fly the neighb'ring hand?
Along the ſunny bank or wat'ry mead,
Ten thouſand ſtalks their various bloſſoms ſpread;
Peaceful and lowly, in their native ſoil,
They neither know to ſpin nor care to toil,
Yet with confeſs'd magnificence deride
Our vile attire, and impotence of pride.
The cowſlip ſmiles in brighter yellow dreſt,
Than that which veils the nubile virgin's breaſt;
A fairer red ſtands bluſhing in the roſe,
Than that which on the bridegroom's veſtment flows.
Take but the humbleſt lily of the field,
And if our pride will to our reaſon yield,
It muſt by fure compariſon be ſhown,
That on the regal ſeat great David's ſon,
Array'd in all his robes and types of pow'r,
Shines with leſs glory than that ſimple flow'r.
Of fiſhes next, my Friends, I would inquire:
How the mute race engender or reſpire,
From the ſmall fry that glide on Jordan's ſtream
Unmark'd, a multitude without a name,
To that leviathan, who o'er the ſeas
Immenſe rolls onward his impetuous ways,
And mocks the wind, and in the tempeſt plays?
How they in warlike bands march greatly forth,
From freezing waters and the colder North,

To ſouthern climes directing their career,
Their ſtation changing with th' inverted year?
How all with careful knowledge are indu'd,
To chuſe their proper bed, and wave, and food;
To guard their ſpawn, and educate her brood?
Of birds, how each, according to her kind,
Proper materials for her neſt can find,
And build a frame which deepeſt thought in man
Would or amend or imitate in vain?
How in ſmall flights they know to try their young,
And teach the callow child her parent's ſong?
Why theſe frequent the plain, and thoſe the wood?
Why ev'ry land has her ſpecific brood?
Where the tall crane or winding ſwallow goes,
Fearful of gathering winds and falling ſnows;
If into rocks or hollow trees they creep,
In temporary death confin'd to ſleep,
Or, conſcious of the coming evil, fly
To milder regions and a ſouthern ſky?
Of beaſts and creeping inſects ſhall we trace
The wondrous nature and the various race;
Or wild or tame, or friend to man or foe,
Of us what they, or what of them we know?
Tell me, ye Studious! who to pretend to ſee
Far into Nature's boſom, whence the bee
Was firſt inform'd her vent'rous flight to ſteer
Thro' tracTleſs paths and an abyſs of air?

Whence ſhe avoids the ſlimy marſh, and knows
The fertile hills, where ſweeter herbage grows,
And honey-making flow'rs their opening buds diſcloſe?
How, from the thicken'd miſt and ſetting ſun
Finds ſhe the labour of her day is done?
Who taught her againſt winds and rains to ſtrive,
To bring her burden to the certain hive,
And thro' the liquid fields again to paſs
Duteous, and hark'ning to the ſounding braſs?
And, O thou Sluggard! tell me why the ant,
'Midſt ſummer's plenty thinks of winter's want
By conſtant journies careful to prepare
Her ſtores, and bringing home the corny ear,
By what inſtruction does ſhe bite the grain,
Leſt hid in earth, and taking root again,
It might elude the foreſight of her care?
Diſtinct in either inſect's deed appear
The marks of thought, contrivance, hope, and fear.
Fix thy corporeal and internal eye
On the young gnat or new-engender'd fly,
Or the vile worm, that yeſterday began
To crawl, thy fellow-creatures, abject man!
Like thee they breathe, they move, they taſte, they ſee,
They ſhow their paſſions, by their acts, like thee;
Darting their ſtings, they previouſly declare
Deſign'd revenge, and fierce intent of war:

Laying their eggs, they evidently prove
The genial pow'r and full effect of love.
Each, then, has organs to digeſt his food,
One to beget, and one receive the brood;
Has limbs and ſinews, blood, and heart, and brain,
Life and her proper functions to ſuſtain,
Tho' the whole fabric ſmaller than a grain.
What more can our penurious reaſon grant
To the large whale or caſtled elephant?
To thoſe enormous terrors of the Nile,
The creſted ſnake and long-tailed crocodile,
Than that all differ but in ſhape and name,
Each deſtin'd to a leſs or larger frame?
For potent Nature loves a various act,
Prone to enlarge, or ſtudious to contract;
Now forms her work too ſmall, now too immenſe,
And ſcorns the meaſures of our feeble ſenſe.
The object, ſpread too far, or rais'd too high,
Denies its real image to the eye;
Too little, it eludes the dazzled ſight,
Becomes mixt blackneſs or unparted light.
Water and air the varied form confound; [round.
The ſtraight looks crooked, and the ſquare grows
Thus while with fruitleſs hope and weary pain
We ſeek great Nature's power, but ſeek in vain,
Safe ſits the goddeſs in her dark retreat,
Around her myriads of ideas wait,

And endleſs ſhapes, which the myſterious queen
Can take or quit, can alter or retain,
As from our loſt purſuit ſhe wills to hide
Her cloſe decrees, and chaſten human pride.
Untam'd and fierce the tiger ſtill remains;
He tires his life in biting on his chains:
For the kind gifts of water and of food
Ungrateful, and returning ill for good,
He ſeeks his keeper's fleſh, and thirſts his blood:
While the ſtrong camel and the gen'rous horſe,
Reſtrain'd and aw'd by man's inferior force,
Do to the rider's will their rage ſubmit,
And anſwer to the ſpur, and own the bit;
Stretch their glad mouths to meet the feeder's hand,
Pleas'd with his weight, and proud of his command.
Again: the lonely fox roams far abroad,
On ſecret rapine bent and midnight fraud;
Now haunts the cliff, now traverſes the lawn,
And flies the hated neighbourhood of man;
While the kind ſpaniel and the faithful hound,
Likeſt that fox in ſhape and ſpecies found,
Refuſes thro' theſe cliffs and lawns to roam,
Purſues the noted path, and covets home,
Does with kind joy domeſtic faces meet,
Takes what the glutted child denies to eat,
And dying, licks his long-lov'd maſter's feet.
By what immediate cauſe they are inclin'd,
In many acts, 'tis hard, I own, to find.

I ſee in others, or I think I ſee,
That ſtrict their principles and ours agree.
Evil, like us, they ſhun, and covet good,
Abhor the poiſon, and receive the food:
Like us they love or hate; like us they know
To joy the friend, or grapple with the foe.
With ſeeming thought their action they intend,
And uſe the means proportion'd to the end.
Then vainly the philoſopher avers
That reaſon guides our deed and inſtinct theirs.
How can we juſtly diff'rent cauſes frame,
When the effects entirely are the ſame?
Inſtinct and reaſon how can we divide?
'Tis the fool's ignorance and the pedant's pride.

With the ſame folly, ſure, man vaunts his ſway,
If the brute beaſt refuſes to obey.
For, tell me, when the empty boaſter's word
Proclaims himſelf the univerſal lord,
Does he not tremble leſt the lion's paw
Should join his plea againſt the fancy'd law?
Would not the learned coward leave the chair,
If in the ſchools or porches ſhould appear
The fierce hyæna or the foaming bear?

The combatant too late the field declines,
When now the ſword is girded to his loins.
When the ſwift veſſel flies before the wind,
Too late the ſailor views the land behind:
And 'tis too late now back again to bring
Inquiry, rais'd and tow'ring on the wing;

Forward ſhe ſtrives, averſe to be withheld
From nobler objects and a larger field.
Conſider with me this etherial ſpace,
Yielding to earth and ſea the middle place:
Anxious I aſk ye how the penſile ball
Should never ſtrive to riſe nor never fear to fall?
When I reflect how the revolving ſun
Does round our globe his crooked journies run,
I doubt of many lands if they contain
Or herd of beaſt or colony of man;
If any nation paſs their deſtin'd days
Beneath the neighb'ring ſun's directer rays;
If any ſuffer, on the polar coaſt,
The rage of Arctos and eternal froſt.
May not the pleaſure of Omnipotence
To each of theſe ſome ſecret good diſpenſe?
Thoſe who amidſt the torrid regions live,
May they not gales unknown to us receive?
See daily ſhow'rs rejoice the thirſty earth,
And bleſs the flow'ry buds' ſucceeding birth?
May they not pity us, condemn'd to bear
The various heav'n of an obliquer ſphere,
While by fix'd laws, and with a juſt return,
They feel twelve hours that ſhade for twelve that burn,
And praiſe the neighb'ring ſun, whoſe conſtant flame
Enlightens them with ſeaſons ſtill the ſame?
And may not thoſe whoſe diſtant lot is caſt
North beyond Tartary's extended waſte,

Where thro' the plains of one continual day
Six ſhining months purſue their even way,
And ſix ſucceeding urge their duſky flight,
Obſcur'd with vapours, and o'erwhelm'd in night;
May not, I aſk, the natives of theſe climes
(As annals may inform ſucceeding times)
To our quotidian change of heav'n prefer
Their own viciſſitude and equal ſhare
Of day and night diſparted thro' the year?
May they not ſcorn our ſun's repeated race,
To narrow bounds preſcrib'd and little ſpace,
Haſt'ning from morn, and headlong driv'n from noon,
Half of our daily toil yet ſcarcely done?
May they not juſtly to our climes upbraid
Shortneſs of night and penury of ſhade,
That ere our wearied limbs are juſtly bleſt
With wholeſome ſleep and neceſſary reſt,
Another ſun demands return of care,
The remnant toil of yeſterday to bear?
Whilſt, when the ſolar beams ſalute their ſight,
Bold and ſecure in half a year of light,
Uninterrupted voyages they take
To the remoteſt wood and fartheſt lake,
Manage the fiſhing, and purſue the courſe
With more extended nerves and more continu'd force;
And when declining day forſakes their ſky,
When gath'ring clouds ſpeak gloomy winter nigh,
With plenty for the coming ſeaſon bleſs'd,
Six ſolid months (an age) they live, releas'd

From all the labour, proceſs, clamour, woe,
Which our ſad ſcenes of daily action know;
They light the ſhining lamp, prepare the feaſt,
And with full mirth receive the welcome gueſt,
Or tell their tender loves (the only care
Which now they ſuffer) to the liſt'ning fair,
And, rais'd in pleaſure, or repos'd in eaſe,
(Grateful alternates of ſubſtantial peace)
They bleſs the long nocturnal influence ſhed
On the crown'd goblet and the genial bed.

In foreign iſles which our diſcov'rers find,
Far from this length of continent disjoin'd,
The rugged bear's or ſpotted lynx's brood
Frighten the vallies and infeſt the wood,
The hungry crocodile and hiſſing ſnake
Lurk in the troubled ſtream and fenny brake;
And man untaught, and rav'nous as the beaſt,
Does valley, wood, and brake, and ſtream, infeſt;
Deriv'd theſe men and animals their birth
From trunk of oak or pregnant womb of earth?
Whence then the old belief, that all began
In Eden's ſhade and one created man?
Or grant this progeny was wafted o'er
By coaſting boats from next adjacent ſhore,
Would thoſe, from whom we will ſuppoſe they ſpring,
Slaughter to harmleſs lands and poiſon bring?
Would they on board or bears or lynxes take,
Feed the ſhe-adder and the brooding ſnake?

Or could they think the new-diſcover'd iſle
Pleas'd to receive a pregnant crocodile?
And ſince the ſavage lineage we muſt trace
From Noah ſav'd, and his diſtinguiſh'd race,
How ſhould their fathers happen to forget
The arts which Noah taught, the rules he ſet,
To ſow the glebe, to plant the gen'rous vine,
And load with grateful flames the holy ſhrine?
While the great ſire's unhappy ſons are found,
Unpreſs'd their vintage, and untill'd their ground,
Straggling o'er dale and hill in queſt of food,
And rude of arts, of virtue, and of God.
How ſhall we next o'er earth and ſeas purſue
The vary'd forms of ev'ry thing we view;
That all is chang'd, tho' all is ſtill the ſame,
Fluid the parts, yet durable the frame?
Of thoſe materials which have been confeſt
The priſtine ſprings and parents of the reſt,
Each becomes other. Water ſtopp'd gives birth
To graſs and plants, and thickens into earth;
Diffus'd it riſes in a higher ſphere,
Dilates its drops, and ſoftens into air:
Thoſe finer parts of air again aſpire,
Move into warmth, and brighten into fire;
That fire once more, by thicker air o'ercome,
And downward forc'd, in earth's capacious womb
Alters its particles, is fire no more,
But lies reſplendent duſt and ſhining ore;

Or, running thro' the mighty Mother's veins,
Changes its ſhape, puts off its old remains;
With wat'ry parts its leſſen'd force divides,
Flows into waves, and riſes into tides.

Diſparted ſtreams ſhall from their channels fly,
And, deep ſurcharg'd, by ſandy mountains lie
Obſcurely ſepulcher'd. By eating rain
And furious wind, down to the diſtant plain
The hill that hides his head above the ſkies
Shall fall: the plain, by ſlow degrees, ſhall riſe
Higher than erſt had ſtood the ſummit hill;
For Time muſt Nature's great beheſt fulfil.

Thus by a length of years and change of fate,
All things are light or heavy, ſmall or great;
Thus Jordan's waves ſhall future clouds appear,
And Egypt's pyramids refine to air;
Thus later age ſhall aſk for Piſon's flood,
And travellers inquire where Babel ſtood.

Now where we ſee theſe changes often fall,
Sedate we paſs them by as natural;
Where to our eye more rarely they appear,
The pompous name of Prodigy they bear:
Let active thought theſe cloſe meanders trace,
Let human wit their dubious bound'ries place.
Are all things miracle, or nothing ſuch?
And prove we not too little or too much?

For that a branch cut off, a wither'd rod,
Should at a word pronounc'd revive and bud,

Is this more ſtrange than that the mountain's brow,
Stripp'd by December's froſt and white with ſnow,
Should puſh in ſpring ten thouſand thouſand buds,
And boaſt returning leaves and blooming woods?
That each ſucceſſive night from opening heav'n
The food of angels ſhould to man be given,
Is this more ſtrange than that with common bread
Our fainting bodies every day are fed?
Than that each grain and ſeed, conſum'd in earth,
Raiſes its ſtore and multiplies its birth?
And from the handful which the tiller ſows,
The labour'd fields rejoice, and future harveſt flows?

Then from whate'er we can to ſenſe produce
Common and plain, or wondrous and abſtruſe,
From Nature's conſtant or eccentric laws
The thoughtful ſoul this gen'ral influence draws,
That an effect muſt preſuppoſe a cauſe:
And while ſhe does her upward flight ſuſtain,
Touching each link of the continu'd chain,
At length ſhe is oblig'd and forc'd to ſee
A firſt, a ſource, a life, a deity;
What has for ever been, and muſt for ever be.

This great exiſtence thus by reaſon found,
Bleſt by all pow'r, with all perfection crown'd,
How can we bind or limit his decree
By what our ear has heard or eye may ſee?
Say, then, is all in heaps of water loſt,
Beyond the iſlands and the mid-land coaſt?

Or has that God who gave our world its birth,
Sever'd thoſe waters by ſome other earth,
Countries by future plough-ſhares to be torn,
And cities rais'd by nations yet unborn!
Ere the progreſſive courſe of reſtleſs age
Performs three thouſand times its annual ſtage,
May not our pow'r and learning be ſuppreſt,
And arts and empire learn to travel weſt?

Where, by the ſtrength of this idea charm'd,
Lighten'd with glory, and with rapture warm'd,
Aſcends my Soul? what ſees ſhe white and great
Amidſt ſubjected ſeas? An iſle, the ſeat
Of pow'r and plenty, her imperial throne
For juſtice and for mercy ſought and known;
Virtues ſublime, great attributes of Heav'n,
From thence to this diſtinguiſh'd nation given:
Yet farther weſt the weſtern iſle extends
Her happy fame; her armed fleets ſhe ſends
To climates folded yet from human eye,
And lands which we imagine wave and ſky;
From pole to pole ſhe hears her acts reſound,
And rules an empire by no ocean bound;
Knows her ſhips anchor'd, and her ſails unfurl'd,
In other Indies and a ſecond world.

Long ſhall Britannia (that muſt be her name)
Be firſt in conqueſt, and preſide in fame;
Long ſhall her favour'd monarchy engage
The teeth of Envy and the force of Age;

Rever'd and happy, ſhe ſhall long remain
Of human things leaſt changeable, leaſt vain;
Yet all muſt with the gen'ral doom comply,
And this great glorious pow'r, tho' laſt, muſt die.

Now let us leave this earth, and lift our eye
To the large convex of yon' azure ſky:
Behold it like an ample curtain ſpread,
Now ſtreak'd and glowing with the morning red;
Anon at noon in flaming yellow bright,
And chuſing ſable for the peaceful night.
Aſk Reaſon, now, whence light and ſhade were giv'n,
And whence this great variety of Heav'n?
Reaſon our guide, what can ſhe more reply,
Than that the ſun illuminates the ſky?
Than that night riſes from his abſent ray,
And his returning luſtre kindles day?

But we expect the morning red in vain,
'Tis hid in vapours, or obſcur'd by rain:
The noon-tide yellow we in vain require,
'Tis black in ſtorm, or red in lightning fire.
Pitchy and dark the night ſometimes appears,
Friend to our woe, and parent of our fears;
Our joy and wonder ſometimes ſhe excites,
With ſtars unnumber'd and eternal lights.
Send forth, ye Wiſe, ſend forth your lab'ring thought,
Let it return, with empty notions fraught
Of airy columns every moment broke,
Of circling whirlpools, and of ſpheres of ſmoke;

Yet this ſolution but once more affords
New change of terms and ſcaffolding of words;
In other garb my queſtion I receive,
And take the doubt the very ſame I gave.
Lo! as a giant ſtrong the luſty Sun
Multiply'd rounds in one great round does run,
Twofold his courſe, yet conſtant his career,
Changing the day, and finiſhing the year:
Again, when his deſcending orb retires,
And earth perceives the abſence of his fires,
The moon affords us her alternate ray,
And with kind beams diſtributes fainter day,
Yet keeps the ſtages of her monthly race,
Various her beams, and changeable her face;
Each planet ſhining in his proper ſphere,
Does with juſt ſpeed his radiant voyage ſteer;
Each ſees his lamp with diff'rent luſtre crown'd;
Eachknows his courſe with diff'rent periods bound,
And in his paſſage thro' the liquid ſpace,
Nor haſtens nor retards his neighbour's race.
Now ſhine theſe planets with ſubſtantial rays?
Does innate luſtre gild their meaſur'd days?
Or do they (as your ſchemes, I think, have ſhown)
Dart furtive beams and glory not their own,
All ſervants to that ſource of light, the ſun?
Again; I ſee ten thouſand thouſand ſtars,
Nor caſt in lines, in circles, nor in ſquares,

(Poor rules, with which our bounded mind is fill'd
When we would plant, or cultivate, or build)
But ſhining with ſuch vaſt, ſuch various light,
As ſpeaks the hand that form'd them infinite.
How mean the order and perfection ſought
In the beſt product of the human thought,
Compar'd to the great harmony that reigns
In what the Spirit of the world ordains!

Now if the ſun to earth tranſmits his ray,
Yet does not ſcorch us with too fierce a day,
How ſmall a portion of his pow'r is giv'n
To orbs more diſtant, and remoter heav'n?
And of thoſe ſtars which our imperfect eye
Has doom'd and fix'd to one eternal ſky,
Each by a native ſtock of honour great,
May dart ſtrong influence, and diffuſe kind heat,
Itſelf a ſun, and with tranſmiſſive light
Enliven worlds deny'd to human ſight;
Around the circles of their ambient ſkies
New moons may grow or wane, may ſet or riſe,
And other ſtars may to thoſe ſuns be earths,
Give their own elements their proper births,
Divide their climes, or elevate their pole,
See their lands flouriſh, and their oceans roll;
Yet theſe great orbs, thus radically bright,
Primitive founts and origins of light,
May each to other (as their diff'rent ſphere
Makes or their diſtance or their height appear)
Be ſeen a nobler or inferior ſtar,

And in that ſpace which we call air and ſky,
Myriads of earths, and moons, and ſuns, may lie
Unmeaſur'd and unknown by human eye.

In vain we meaſure this amazing ſphere,
And find and fix its centre here or there,
Whilſt its circumf'rence, ſcorning to be brought
Ev'n into fancy'd ſpace, illudes our vanquiſh'd thought.

Where, then, are all the radiant monſters driv'n
With which your gueſſes fill'd the frighten'd heav'n?
Where will their fictious images remain?
In paper ſchemes, and the Chaldean's brain?

This problem yet, this offspring of a gueſs,
Let us for once a child of Truth confeſs;
That theſe fair ſtars, theſe objects of delight
And terror to our ſearching dazzled ſight,
Are worlds immenſe, unnumber'd, infinite;
But do theſe worlds diſplay their beams, or guide
Their orbs, to ſerve thy uſe, to pleaſe thy pride?
Thyſelf but duſt, thy ſtature but a ſpan,
A moment thy duration, fooliſh man!
As well may the minuteſt emmet ſay
That Caucaſus was rais'd to pave his way;
The ſnail, that Lebanon's extended wood
Was deſtin'd only for his walk and food;
The vileſt cockle, gaping on the coaſt,
That rounds the ample ſeas, as well may boaſt
The craggy rock projects above the ſky,
That he in ſafety at its foot may lie;

And the whole ocean's confluent waters ſwell,
Only to quench his thirſt, or move and blanch his ſhell.
A higher flight the vent'rous goddeſs tries,
Leaving material worlds and local ſkies;
Inquires what are the beings, where the ſpace,
That form'd and held the angels' ancient race?
For rebel Lucifer with Michael fought
(I offer only what Tradition taught)
Embattl'd cherub againſt cherub roſe,
Did ſhield to ſhield and pow'r to pow'r oppoſe;
Heav'n rung with triumph, hell was fill'd with woes.
What were theſe forms, of which your volumes tell
How ſome fought great, and others recreant fell?
Theſe bound to bear an everlaſting load,
Durance of chain, and baniſhment of God;
By fatal turns their wretched ſtrength to tire,
To ſwim in ſulph'rous lakes, or land on ſolid fire;
While thoſe, exalted to primeval light,
Exceſs of bleſſing, and ſupreme delight,
Only perceive ſome little pauſe of joys,
In thoſe great moments when their God employs
Their miniſtry to pour his threaten'd hate
On the proud king or the rebellious ſtate;
Or to reverſe Jehovah's high command,
And ſpeak the thunder falling from his hand,
When to his duty the proud king returns,
And the rebellious ſtate in aſhes mourns?

How can good angels be in heav'n confin'd,
Or view that Preſence which no ſpace can bind?
Is God above, beneath, or yon', or here?
He who made all, is he not ev'ry where?
Oh! how can wicked angels find a night
So dark to hide 'em from that piercing light
Which form'd the eye, and gave the pow'r of ſight?
What mean I now of angel, when I hear
Firm body, ſpirit pure, or fluid air?
Spirits, to action ſpiritual confin'd,
Friends to our thought, and kindred to our mind,
Should only act and prompt us from within,
Nor by external eye be ever ſeen.
Was it not therefore to our fathers known
That theſe had appetite, and limb, and bone?
Elſe how could Abram waſh their weary'd feet,
Or Sarah pleaſe their taſte with ſav'ry meat?
Whence ſhould they fear? or why did Lot engage
To ſave their bodies from abuſive rage?
And how could Jacob, in a real fight,
Feel or reſiſt the wreſtling angel's might?
How could a form its ſtrength with matter try?
Or how a ſpirit touch a mortal's thigh?
Now are they air condens'd, or gather'd rays?
How guide they then our pray'r, or keep our ways,
By ſtronger blaſts ſtill ſubject to be toſt,
By tempeſts ſcatter'd, and in whirlwinds loſt?

Have they, again, (as Sacred ſong proclaims)
Subſtances real, and exiſting frames?
How comes it, ſince with them we jointly ſhare
The great effect of one Creator's care,
That whilſt our bodies ſicken and decay,
Theirs are for ever healthy, young, and gay?
Why, whilſt we ſtruggle, in this vale beneath,
With want and ſorrow, with diſeaſe and death,
Do they more bleſs'd perpetual life employ,
On ſongs of pleaſure, and in ſcenes of joy?

Now, when my mind has all this world ſurvey'd,
And found that nothing by itſelf was made;
When thought has rais'd itſelf by juſt degrees,
From vallies crown'd with flow'rs, and hills with trees,
From ſmoking min'rals, and from riſing ſtreams,
From fatt'ning Nilus, or victorious Thames;
From all the living that four-footed move
Along the ſhore, the meadow, or the grove;
From all that can with fins or feathers fly
Thro' the aërial or the wat'ry ſky;
From the poor reptile with a reas'ning ſoul,
That miſerable maſter of the whole;
From this great object of the body's eye,
This fair half-round, this ample azure ſky,
Terribly large, and wonderfully bright,
With ſtars unnumber'd, and unmeaſur'd light;
From eſſences unſeen, celeſtial names,
Enlight'ning ſpirits, and miniſterial flames,

Angels, Dominions, Potentates, and Thrones,
All that in each degree the name of creature owns;
Lift we our reaſon to that ſov'reign Cauſe [laws;
Who bleſt the whole with life, and bounded it with
Who forth from nothing call'd this comely frame,
His will and act, his word and work the ſame;
To whom a thouſand years are but a day;
Who bade the Light her genial beams diſplay,
And ſet the moon, and taught the ſun his way;
Who waking Time, his creature, from the ſource
Primeval, order'd his predeſtin'd courſe,
Himſelf, as in the hollow of his hand,
Holding, obedient to his high command,
The deep abyſs, the long continu'd ſtore, [pour
Where months, and days, and hours, and minutes,
Their floating parts, and thenceforth are no more:
This Alpha and Omega, Firſt and Laſt,
Who, like the potter, in a mould has caſt
The world's great frame, commanding it to be
Such as the eyes of Senſe and Reaſon ſee,
Yet if he wills may change or ſpoil the whole,
May take yon' beauteous, myſtic, ſtarry roll,
And burn it like an uſeleſs parchment ſcroll;
May from its baſis in one moment pour
This melted earth—
Like liquid metal, and like burning ore;
Who, ſole in pow'r, at the beginning ſaid,
Let ſea, and air, and earth, and heav'n, be made,

And it was ſo—And when he ſhall ordain
In other ſort, has but to ſpeak again,
And they ſhall be no more: of this great theme,
This glorious, hallow'd, everlaſting Name,
This God, I would diſcourſe—

The learned Elders ſat appall'd, amaz'd,
And each with mutual look on other gaz'd;
Nor ſpeech they meditate, nor anſwer frame;
Too plain, alas! their ſilence ſpake their ſhame;
Till one in whom an outward mien appear'd
And turn ſuperior to the vulgar herd,
Began: That human learning's furtheſt reach
Was but to note the doctrines I could teach;
That mine to ſpeak, and theirs was to obey,
For I in knowledge more than pow'r did ſway,
And the aſtoniſh'd world in me beheld
Moſes eclips'd, and Jeſſe's ſon excell'd.
Humble a ſecond bow'd, and took the word,
Foreſaw my name by future age ador'd;
O live, ſaid he, thou wiſeſt of the wiſe;
As none has equall'd, none ſhall ever riſe
Excelling thee—

Parent of wicked, bane of honeſt deeds,
Pernicious Flatt'ry! thy malignant ſeeds
In an ill hour, and by a fatal hand,
Sadly diffus'd o'er Virtue's gleby land,
With riſing pride amidſt the corn appear,
And choke the hopes and harveſt of the year.

And now the whole perplex'd ignoble crowd,
Mute to my queſtions, in my praiſes loud,
Echo'd the word: whence things aroſe, or how
They thus exiſt, the apteſt nothing know:
What yet is not, but is ordain'd to be,
All vail of doubt apart, the dulleſt ſee.

My Prophets and my Sophiſts finiſh'd here
Their civil efforts of the verbal war:
Not ſo my Rabbins and Logicians yield;
Retiring, ſtill they combat: from the field
Of open arms unwilling they depart,
And ſculk behind the ſubterfuge of art.
To ſpeak one thing mix'd dialects they join,
Divide the ſimple, and the plain define;
Fix fancy'd laws, and form imagin'd rules,
Terms of their art, and jargon of their ſchools,
Ill-grounded maxims, by falſe gloſs enlarg'd,
And captious ſcience againſt reaſon charg'd.

Soon their crude notions with each other fought;
The adverſe ſect deny'd what this had taught;
And he at length the ampleſt triumph gain'd,
Who contradicted what the laſt maintain'd.

O wretched impotence of human mind!
We, erring, ſtill excuſe for error find,
And darkling grope, not knowing we are blind.

Vain man! ſince firſt the bluſhing ſire eſſay'd
His folly with connected leaves to ſhade,

How does the crime of thy reſembling race,
With like attempt, that priſtine error trace?
Too plain thy nakedneſs of ſoul eſpy'd,
Why doſt thou ſtrive the conſcious ſhame to hide,
By maſks of eloquence and veils of pride?
With outward ſmiles their flatt'ry I receiv'd,
Own'd my ſick mind by their diſcourſe reliev'd;
But bent, and inward to myſelf, again
Perplex'd, theſe matters I revolv'd in vain.
My ſearch ſtill tir'd, my labour ſtill renew'd,
At length I Ignorance and Knowledge view'd
Impartial; both in equal balance laid,
Light flew the knowing ſcale, the doubtful heavy [weigh'd.
Forc'd by reflective reaſon, I confeſs
That human ſcience is uncertain gueſs.
Alas! we graſp at clouds, and beat the air,
Vexing that ſpirit we intend to clear.
Can thought beyond the bounds of matter climb?
Or who ſhall tell me what is ſpace or time?
In vain we lift up our preſumptuous eyes
To what our Maker to their ken denies:
The ſearcher follows faſt, the object faſter flies.
The little which imperfectly we find,
Seduces only the bewilder'd mind
To fruitleſs ſearch of ſomething yet behind.
Various diſcuſſions tear our heated brain:
Opinions often turn; ſtill doubts remain;
And who indulges thought increaſes pain.

How narrow limits were to Wiſdom giv'n?
Earth ſhe ſurveys; ſhe thence would meaſure heav'n:
Thro' miſts obſcure, now wings her tedious way,
Now wanders, dazzled with too bright a day,
And from the ſummit of a pathleſs coaſt
Sees infinite, and in that ſight is loſt.

Remember that the curs'd deſire to know,
Offspring of Adam, was thy ſource of woe;
Why wilt thou, then, renew the vain purſuit,
And raſhly catch at the forbidden fruit?
With empty labour and eluded ſtrife
Seeking, by knowledge, to attain to life,
For ever from that fatal tree debarr'd,
Which flaming ſwords and angry cherubs guard.

PLEASURE.

BOOK II.

TEXTS CHIEFLY ALLUDED TO IN THIS BOOK.

I ſaid in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleaſure, Eccleſ. chap. ii. *ver.* 1.

I made me great works; I builded me houſes; I planted me vineyards, ver. 4.

I made me gardens, and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits, ver. 5.

I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees, ver. 6.

Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of ſpirit, and there was no profit under the ſun, ver. 11.

I gat me men-ſingers, and women-ſingers, and the delights of the ſons of men, as muſical inſtruments, and that of all ſorts, ver. 8.

I ſought in mine heart to give myſelf unto wine, (yet acquainting mine heart with wiſdom) and to lay hold on folly, till I might ſee what was that good for the ſons of men, which they ſhould do under the heaven, all the days of their life, ver. 3.

Then ſaid I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, ſo it happeneth even to me: and why was I then more wiſe? Then I ſaid in my heart, that this alſo is vanity, Eccleſ. chap. ii. *ver.* 15.

Therefore I hated life, becauſe the work that is wrought under the ſun is grievous unto me, chap. ii. *ver.* 17.

Dead flies cauſe the ointment of the apothecary to ſend forth a ſtinking ſavour; ſo doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wiſdom and honour, chap. x. *ver.* 1.

The memory of the juſt is bleſſed; but the name of the wicked ſhall rot, Prov. chap. x. *ver.* 7.

PLEASURE.

BOOK II.

The Argument.

Solomon again ſeeking happineſs, inquires if wealth and greatneſs can produce it; begins with the magnificence of gardens and buildings; the luxury of muſic and feaſting; and proceeds to the hopes and deſires of love. In two epiſodes are ſhewn the follies and troubles of that paſſion. Solomon, ſtill diſappointed, falls under the temptation of libertiniſm and idolatry; recovers his thought; reaſons aright; and concludes that, as to the purſuit of pleaſure and ſenſual delight, ALL IS VANITY AND VEXATION OF SPIRIT.

TRY then, O Man, the moments to deceive
That from the womb attend thee to the grave:
For weary'd Nature find ſome apter ſcheme;
Health be thy hope, and pleaſure be thy theme:
From the perplexing and unequal ways
Where Study brings thee; from the endleſs maze
Which Doubt perſuades to run, forewarn'd, recede
To the gay field and flow'ry path, that lead
To jocund mirth, ſoft joy, and careleſs eaſe:
Forſake what may inſtruct for what may pleaſe:
Eſſay amuſing art and proud expenſe,
And make thy reaſon ſubject to thy ſenſe.
I commun'd thus: the pow'r of wealth I try'd,
And all the various luxe of coſtly pride;

Artiſts and plans reliev'd my ſolemn hours;
I founded palaces and planted bow'rs.
Birds, fiſhes, beaſts, of each exotic kind
I to the limits of my court confin'd.
To trees transferr'd I gave a ſecond birth,
And bid a foreign ſhade grace Judah's earth.
Fiſh-ponds were made where former foreſts grew,
And hills were levell'd to extend the view.
Rivers, diverted from their native courſe,
And bound with chains of artificial force,
From large caſcades in pleaſing tumult roll'd,
Or roſe thro' figur'd ſtone or breathing gold.
From furtheſt Africa's tormented womb
The marble brought, erects the ſpacious dome,
Or forms the pillars' long-extended rows,
On which the planted grove and penſile garden grows.
The workmen here obey the maſter's call
To gild the turret and to paint the wall;
To mark the pavement there with various ſtone,
And on the jaſper ſteps to rear the throne:
The ſpreading cedar, that an age had ſtood,
Supreme of trees, and miſtreſs of the wood,
Cut down and carv'd, my ſhining roof adorns,
And Lebanon his ruin'd honour mourns.
A thouſand artiſts ſhew their cunning pow'r
To raiſe the wonders of the iv'ry tow'r:
A thouſand maidens ply the purple loom
To weave the bed and deck the regal room;

Till Tyre confeſſes her exhauſted ſtore,
That on her coaſt the murex * is no more;
Till from the Parian iſle and Libya's coaſt
The mountains grieve their hopes of marble loſt;
And India's woods return their juſt complaint,
Their brood decay'd, and want of elephant.

My full deſign, with vaſt expenſe achiev'd,
I came, beheld, admir'd, reflected, griev'd;
I chid the folly of my thoughtleſs haſte,
For, the work perfected, the joy was paſt.

To my new courts ſad Thought did ſtill repair,
And round my gilded roofs hung hov'ring Care.
In vain on ſilken beds I ſought repoſe,
And reſtleſs oft' from purple couches roſe;
Vexatious Thought ſtill found my flying mind
Nor bound by limits nor to place confin'd;
Haunted my nights, and terrify'd my days,
Stalk'd thro' my gardens and purſu'd my ways,
Norſhut from artful bow'r nor loſt in winding maze.

Yet take thy bent, my Soul; another ſenſe
Indulge; add muſic to magnificence:
Eſſay if harmony may grief control,
Or pow'r of ſound prevail upon the ſoul.
Often our ſeers and poets have confeſt
That muſic's force can tame the furious beaſt;
Can make the wolf or foaming boar reſtrain
His rage, the lion drop his creſted main,

* The murex is a ſhell-fiſh, of the liquor whereof a purple colour is made.

Attentive to the ſong; the lynx forget
His wrath to man, and lick the minſtrel's feet.
Are we, alas! leſs ſavage yet than theſe?
Elſe muſic, ſure, may human cares appeaſe.
I ſpake my purpoſe, and the cheerful choir
Parted their ſhares of harmony: the lyre
Soften'd the timbrel's noiſe; the trumpets' ſound
Provok'd the Dorian flute (both ſweeter found
When mix'd) the fife the viol's notes refin'd,
And ev'ry ſtrength with ev'ry grace was join'd:
Each morn they wak'd me with a ſprightly lay;
Of opening heav'n they ſung, and gladſome day:
Each evening their repeated ſkill expreſt
Scenes of repoſe and images of reſt:
Yet ſtill in vain; for muſic gather'd thought;
But how unequal the effects it brought?
The ſoft ideas of the cheerful note,
Lightly receiv'd, were eaſily forgot;
The ſolemn violence of the graver ſound
Knew to ſtrike deep, and leave a laſting wound.
And now reflecting, I with grief deſcry
The fickly luſt of the fantaſtic eye;
How the weak organ is with ſeeing cloy'd,
Flying ere night what it at noon enjoy'd.
And now (unhappy ſearch of thought!) I found
The fickle ear ſoon glutted with the ſound,
Condemn'd eternal changes to purſue,
Tir'd with the laſt, and eager of the new.

I bade the virgins and the youth advance,
To temper muſic with the ſprightly dance.
In vain! too low the mimic motions ſeem;
What takes our heart muſt merit our eſteem.
Nature, I thought, perform'd too mean a part,
Forming her movements to the rules of art;
And, vex'd, I found that the muſician's hand
Had o'er the dancer's mind too great command.

I drank; I lik'd it not: 'twas rage; 'twas noiſe;
An airy ſcene of tranſitory joys.
In vain I truſted that the flowing bowl
Would baniſh ſorrow and enlarge the ſoul.
To the late revel and protracted feaſt
Wild dreams ſucceeded and diſorder'd reſt;
And as at dawn of morn fair reaſon's light
Broke thro' the fumes and phantoms of the night,
What had been ſaid, I aſk'd my ſoul, what done?
How flow'd our mirth, and whence the ſource begun?
Perhaps the jeſt that charm'd the ſprightly crowd,
And made the jovial table laugh ſo loud,
To ſome falſe notion ow'd its poor pretence,
To an ambiguous word's perverted ſenſe,
To a wild ſonnet, or a wanton air,
Offence and torture to the ſober ear.
Perhaps, alas! the pleaſing ſtream was brought
From this man's error, from another's fault;
From topics which good-nature would forget,
And prudence mention with the laſt regret.

Add yet unnumber'd ills that lie unſeen
In the pernicious draught; the word obſcene,
Or harſh, which once elanc'd muſt ever fly
Irrevocable; the too prompt reply,
Seed of ſevere diſtruſt and fierce debate,
What we ſhould ſhun, and what we ought to hate.
Add, too, the blood impov'riſh'd, and the courſe
Of health ſuppreſs'd by wine's continu'd force.
Unhappy man! whom ſorrow thus and rage
To diff'rent ills alternately engage;
Who drinks, alas! but to forget; nor ſees
That melancholy ſloth, ſevere diſeaſe,
Mem'ry confus'd, and interrupted thought,
Death's harbingers, lie latent in the draught;
And in the flow'rs that wreath the ſparkling bowl,
Fell adders hiſs, and pois'nous ſerpents roll.
Remains there ought untry'd that may remove
Sickneſs of mind, and heal the boſom?—Love?
Love yet remains; indulge his genial fire,
Cheriſh fair Hope, ſolicit young Deſire,
And boldly bid thy anxious ſoul explore
This laſt great remedy's myſterious pow'r.
Why, therefore, heſitates my doubtful breaſt?
Why ceaſes it one moment to be bleſt?
Fly ſwift, my Friends; my Servants, fly; employ
Your inſtant pains to bring your maſter joy.
Let all my wives and concubines be dreſt;
Let them to-night attend the royal feaſt;

All Iſrael's beauty, all the foreign fair,
The gifts of princes or the ſpoils of war:
Before their monarch they ſhall ſingly paſs,
And the moſt worthy ſhall obtain the grace.
I ſaid: the feaſt was ſerv'd; the bowl was crown'd;
To the King's pleaſure went the mirthful round.
The women came: as cuſtom wills, they paſt:
On one (O that diſtinguiſh'd one!) I caſt
The fav'rite glance! O! yet my mind retains
That fond beginning of my infant pains.
Mature the virgin was, of Egypt's race,
Grace ſhap'd her limbs, and beauty deck'd her face:
Eaſy her motion ſeem'd, ſerene her air;
Full, tho' unzon'd, her boſom roſe: her hair
Unty'd, and ignorant of artful aid,
Adown her ſhoulders looſely lay diſplay'd,
And in the jetty curls ten thouſand Cupids play'd.
Fix'd on her charms, and pleas'd that I could love,
Aid me, my Friends, contribute to improve
Your monarch's bliſs, I ſaid: freſh roſes bring
To ſtrow my bed, till the impov'riſh'd Spring
Confeſs her want: around my am'rous head
Be dropping myrrh and liquid amber ſhed
Till Arab has no more: from the ſoft lyre,
Sweet flute, and ten-ſtring'd inſtrument, require
Sounds of delight: and thou, fair Nymph, draw nigh,
Thou in whoſe graceful form and potent eye
Thy maſter's joy, long ſought, at length is found,
And as thy brow, let my deſires be crown'd.

O fav'rite Virgin, that haſt warm'd the breaſt
Whoſe ſov'reign dictates ſubjugate the Eaſt!
I ſaid: and ſudden from the golden throne,
With a ſubmiſſive ſtep, I haſted down.
The glowing garland from my hair I took,
Love in my heart, obedience in my look,
Prepar'd to place it on her comely head;
O fav'rite Virgin! (yet again I ſaid)
Receive the honours deſtin'd to thy brow;
And O, above thy fellows, happy thou!
Their duty muſt thy ſov'reign word obey.
Riſe up, my love, my fair one, come away.
What pang, alas! what ecſtaſy of ſmart
Tore up my ſenſes and transfix'd my heart,
When ſhe, with modeſt ſcorn, the wreath return'd,
Reclin'd her beauteous neck, and inward mourn'd!
Forc'd by my pride, I my concern ſuppreſt,
Pretended drowſineſs, and wiſh of reſt;
And ſullen, I forſook th' imperfect feaſt;
Ord'ring the eunuchs, to whoſe proper care
Our Eaſtern grandeur gives th' impriſon'd fair,
To lead her forth to a diſtinguiſh'd bow'r,
And bid her dreſs the bed and wait the hour.
Reſtleſs I follow'd this obdurate maid,
(Swift are the ſteps that Love and Anger tread)
Approach'd her perſon, courted her embrace,
Renew'd my flame, repeated my diſgrace:
By turns put on the ſuppliant and the lord;
Threaten'd this moment, and the next implor'd,

Offer'd again the unaccepted wreath,
And choice of happy love, or inſtant death.
Averſe to all her am'rous king deſir'd,
Far as ſhe might ſhe decently retir'd,
And darting ſcorn and ſorrow from her eyes,
What means, ſaid ſhe, King Solomon the wiſe?
This wretched body trembles at your pow'r;
Thus far could Fortune, but ſhe can no more.
Free to herſelf my potent mind remains,
Nor fears the victor's rage nor feels his chains.
'Tis ſaid that thou canſt plauſibly diſpute,
Supreme of ſeers, of angel, man, and brute;
Canſt plead, with ſubtle wit and fair diſcourſe,
Of paſſion's folly and of reaſon's force:
That to the Tribes attentive, thou canſt know
Whence their misfortunes or their bleſſings flow:
That thou in ſcience as in pow'r art great,
And truth and honour on thy edicts wait.
Where is that knowldge now, that regal thought,
With juſt advice and timely counſel fraught?
Where now, O Judge of Iſrael, does it rove?—
What in one moment doſt thou offer? Love—
Love? why, 'tis joy or ſorrow, peace or ſtrife;
'Tis all the colour of remaining life,
And human mis'ry muſt begin or end
As he becomes a tyrant or a friend.
Would David's ſon, religious, juſt, and grave,
To the firſt bride-bed of the world receive
A foreigner, a Heathen, and a ſlave?

Or, grant thy paſſion has theſe names deſtroy'd,
That Love, like Death, makes all diſtinction void,
Yet in his empire o'er thy abject breaſt,
His flames and torments only are expreſt,
His rage can in my ſmiles alone relent,
And all his joys ſolicit my conſent.

Soft love, ſpontaneous tree, its parted root
Muſt from two hearts with equal vigour ſhoot,
Whilſt each delighted, and delighting, gives
The pleaſing ecſtaſy which each receives:
Cheriſh'd with hope, and fed with joy, it grows,
Its cheerful buds their opening bloom diſcloſe,
And round the happy ſoil diffuſive odour flows.
If angry Fate that mutual care denies,
The fading plant bewails its due ſupplies;
Wild with deſpair, or ſick with grief, it dies.

By force beaſts act, and are by force reſtrain'd;
The human mind by gentle means is gain'd.
Thy uſeleſs ſtrength, miſtaken King, employ:
Sated with rage, and ignorant of joy,
Thou ſhalt not gain what I deny to yield,
Nor reap the harveſt, tho' thou ſpoil'ſt the field.
Know, Solomon, thy poor extent of ſway;
Contract thy brow, and Iſrael ſhall obey;
But wilful Love thou muſt with ſmiles appeaſe,
Approach his awful throne by juſt degrees,
And if thou wouldſt be happy, learn to pleaſe.

Not that thoſe arts can here ſucceſsful prove,
For I am deſtin'd to another's love.

Beyond the cruel bounds of thy command,
To my dear equal, in my native land,
My plighted vow I gave; I his receiv'd:
Each ſwore with truth, with pleaſure each believ'd:
The mutual contract was to heaven convey'd;
In equal ſcales the buſy angels weigh'd
Its ſolemn force, and clapp'd their wings, and ſpread
The laſting roll, recording what we ſaid.

Now in my heart behold thy poniard ſtain'd;
Take the ſad life which I have long diſdain'd;
End, in a dying virgin's wretched fate,
Thy ill-ſtarr'd paſſion and my ſtedfaſt hate:
For long as blood informs theſe circling veins,
Or fleeting breath its lateſt pow'r retains,
Hear me to Egypt's vengeful gods declare
Hate is my part; be thine, O King, deſpair.

Now ſtrike, ſhe ſaid, and open'd bare her breaſt.
Stand it in Judah's Chronicles confeſt
That David's ſon, by impious paſſion mov'd,
Smote a ſhe-ſlave, and murder'd what he lov'd.

Aſham'd, confus'd, I ſtarted from the bed,
And to my ſoul, yet uncollected, ſaid,
Into thyſelf, fond Solomon, return;
Reflect again, and thou again ſhalt mourn.
When I thro' number'd years have pleaſure ſought,
And in vain hope the wanton phantom caught,
To mock my ſenſe and mortify my pride,
'Tis in another's pow'r, and is deny'd.

Am I a king, great Heav'n! does life or death
Hang on the wrath or mercy of my breath,
While kneeling I my ſervant's ſmiles implore,
And one mad damſel dares diſpute my pow'r?
To raviſh her? that thought was ſoon depreſs'd,
Which muſt debaſe the monarch to the beaſt.
To ſend her back? O whither, and to whom?
To lands where Solomon muſt never come?
To that inſulting rival's happy arms
For whom, diſdaining me, ſhe keeps her charms?
Fantaſtic tyrant of the am'rous heart,
How hard thy yoke! how cruel is thy dart?
Thoſe 'ſcape thy anger who refuſe thy ſway,
And thoſe are puniſh'd moſt who moſt obey.
See Judah's king revere thy greater pow'r;
What canſt thou covet, or how triumph more?
Why then, O Love, with an obdurate ear
Does this proud nymph reject a monarch's pray'r?
Why to ſome ſimple ſhepherd does ſhe run,
From the fond arms of David's fav'rite ſon?
Why flies ſhe from the glories of a court,
Where wealth and pleaſure may thy reign ſupport,
To ſome poor cottage on the mountain's brow,
Now bleak with winds, and cover'd now with ſnow,
Where pinching want muſt curb her warm deſires,
And houſehold cares ſuppreſs thy genial fires?
Too aptly the afflicted Heathens prove
The force, while they erect the ſhrines of Love.

His myſtic form the artizans of Greece
In wounded ſtone or molten gold expreſs;
And Cyprus to his godhead pays her vow,
Faſt in his hand the idol holds his bow;
A quiver by his ſide ſuſtains his ſtore
Of pointed darts, ſad emblems of his pow'r;
A pair of wings he has, which he extends
Now to be gone, which now again he bends,
Prone to return, as beſt may ſerve his wanton ends.
Entirely thus I find the fiend pourtray'd,
Since firſt, alas! I ſaw the beauteous maid;
I felt him ſtrike, and now I ſee him fly:
Curs'd dæmon! O! for ever broken lie
Thoſe fatal ſhafts by which I inward bleed!
O! can my wiſhes yet o'ertake thy ſpeed!
Tir'd may'ſt thou pant, and hang thy flagging wing,
Except thou turn'ſt thy courſe, reſolv'd to bring
The damſel back, and ſave the love-ſick king.
My ſoul thus ſtruggling in the fatal net,
Unable to enjoy or to forget,
I reaſon'd much, alas! but more I lov'd,
Sent and recall'd, ordain'd and diſapprov'd,
Till, hopeleſs, plung'd in an abyſs of grief,
I from neceſſity receiv'd relief;
Time gently aided to aſſwage my pain,
And Wiſdom took once more the ſlacken'd reln.
But O how ſhort my interval of woe?
Our griefs how ſwift, our remedies how ſlow!

Another nymph (for ſo did Heav'n ordain,
To change the manner but renew the pain)
Another nymph, amongſt the many fair
That made my ſofter hours their ſolemn care,
Before the reſt affected ſtill to ſtand,
And watch'd my eye, preventing my command.
Abra, ſhe ſo was call'd, did ſooneſt haſte
To grace my preſence; Abra went the laſt:
Abra was ready ere I call'd her name,
And tho' I call'd another, Abra came.
Her equals firſt obſerv'd her growing zeal,
And laughing gloſs'd, that Abra ſerv'd ſo well.
To me her actions did unheeded die,
Or were remark'd but with a common eye,
Till more appriz'd of what the rumour ſaid,
More I obſerv'd peculiar in the maid.
The ſun declin'd had ſhot his weſtern ray,
When, tir'd with buſineſs of the ſolemn day,
I purpos'd to unbend the ev'ning hours,
And banquet private in the women's bow'rs.
I call'd before I ſat to waſh my hands,
For ſo the precept of the law commands;
Love had ordain'd that it was Abra's turn
To mix the ſweets and miniſter the urn.
With awful homage and ſubmiſſive dread
The maid approach'd, on my declining head
To pour the oils: ſhe trembled as ſhe pour'd:
With an unguarded look ſhe now devour'd

My nearer face; and now recall'd her eye,
And heav'd, and ſtrove to hide a ſudden ſigh.
And whence, ſaid I, canſt thou have dread or pain?
What can thy imag'ry of ſorrow mean?
Secluded from the world and all its care,
Haſt thou to grieve or joy, to hope or fear?
For ſure, I added, ſure thy little heart
Ne'er felt Love's anger or receiv'd his dart.
Abaſh'd ſhe bluſh'd, and with diſorder ſpoke;
Her riſing ſhame adorn'd the words it broke.
If the great maſter will deſcend to hear
The humble ſeries of his handmaid's care,
O! while ſhe tells it let him not put on
The look that awes the nations from the throne:
O! let not death ſevere in glory lie
In the King's frown and terror of his eye.
Mine to obey, thy part is to ordain;
And tho' to mention be to ſuffer pain,
If the King ſmiles whilſt I my woe recite,
If weeping I find favour in his ſight,
Flow faſt my tears, full riſing his delight.
O! witneſs earth beneath and heav'n above,
For can I hide it? I am ſick of love;
If madneſs may the name of paſſion bear,
Or love be call'd what is indeed deſpair.
Thou ſov'reign Pow'r, whoſe ſecret will controls
The inward bent and motion of our ſouls!
Why haſt thou plac'd ſuch infinite degrees
Between the cauſe and cure of my diſeaſe?

The mighty object of that raging fire
In which unpity'd Abra muſt expire,
Had he been born ſome ſimple ſhepherd's heir,
The lowing herd or fleecy ſheep his care,
At morn with him I o'er the hills had run,
Scornful of winter's froſt and ſummer's ſun,
Still aſking where he made his flock to reſt at noon.
For him at night, the dear expected gueſt,
I had with haſty joy prepar'd the feaſt,
And from the cottage, o'er the diſtant plain,
Sent forth my longing eye to meet the ſwain,
Wav'ring, impatient, toſs'd by hope and fear,
Till he and joy together ſhould appear,
And the lov'd dog declare his maſter near.
On my declining neck and open breaſt
I ſhould have lull'd the lovely youth to reſt,
And from beneath his head at dawning day,
With ſofteſt care, have ſtol'n my arm away,
To riſe and from the fold releaſe the ſheep,
Fond of his flock, indulgent to his ſleep.
Or if kind Heav'n, propitious to my flame,
(For ſure from Heav'n the faithful ardour came)
Had bleſt my life, and deck'd my natal hour
With height of title and extent of pow'r,
Without a crime my paſſion had aſpir'd,
Found the lov'd prince, and told what I deſir'd.
Then I had come, preventing Sheba's queen,
To ſee the comlieſt of the ſons of men;

To hear the charming poet's am'rous ſong,
And gather honey, falling from his tongue;
To take the fragrant kiſſes of his mouth,
Sweeter than breezes of her native ſouth,
Likening his grace, his perſon, and his mien,
To all that great or beauteous I had ſeen.
Serene and bright his eyes, as ſolar beams,
Reflecting temper'd light from eryſtal ſtreams;
Ruddy as gold his cheek; his boſom fair
As ſilver; the curled ringlets of his hair
Black as the raven's wing; his lip more red
Than eaſtern coral or the ſcarlet thread;
Even his teeth, and white like a young flock,
Coeval, newly ſhorn, from the clear brook
Recent, and blanching on the ſunny rock.
Iv'ry with ſapphires interſpers'd, explains
How white his hands, how blue the manly veins;
Columns of poliſh'd marble, firmly ſet
On golden baſes, are his legs and feet;
His ſtature all majeſtic, all divine,
Straight as the palm-tree, ſtrong as is the pine;
Saffron and myrrh are on his garments ſhed,
And everlaſting ſweets bloom round his head.
What utter I! where am I! wretched maid!
Die, Abra, die; too plainly haſt thou ſaid
Thy ſoul's deſire to meet his high embrace,
And bleſſing ſtamp'd upon thy future race;
To bid attentive nations bleſs thy womb,
With unborn monarchs charg'd, and Solomons to come.

Here o'er her ſpeech her flowing eyes prevail.
O fooliſh maid! and, O unhappy tale!
My ſuff'ring heart for ever ſhall defy
New wounds, and danger from a future eye.
O! yet my tortur'd ſenſes deep retain
The wretched mem'ry of my former pain,
The dire affront, and my Egyptian chain.
As time, I ſaid, may happily efface
That cruel image of the King's diſgrace,
Imperial Reaſon ſhall reſume her ſeat,
And Solomon, once fall'n, again be great.
Betray'd by paſſion, as ſubdu'd in war,
We wiſely ſhould exert a double care,
Nor ever ought a ſecond time to err.
This Abra then——
I ſaw her; 'twas humanity; it gave
Some reſpite to the ſorrows of my ſlave.
Her fond exceſs proclaim'd her paſſion true,
And gen'rous pity to that truth was due.
Well I entreated her who well deſerv'd;
I call'd her often, for ſhe always ſerv'd:
Uſe made her perſon eaſy to my ſight,
And eaſe inſenſibly produc'd delight.
Whene'er I revell'd in the women's bow'rs
(For firſt I ſought her but at looſer hours)
The apples ſhe had gather'd ſmelt moſt ſweet,
The cake ſhe kneaded was the ſav'ry meat;

But fruits their odour loſt, and meats their taſte,
If gentle Abra had not deck'd the feaſt:
Diſhonour'd did the ſparkling goblet ſtand,
Unleſs receiv'd from gentle Abra's hand;
And when the virgins form'd the evening choir,
Raiſing their voices to the maſter-lyre,
Too flat I thought this voice, and that too ſhrill;
One ſhow'd too much, and one too little ſkill;
Nor could my ſoul approve the muſic's tone,
Till all was huſh'd, and Abra ſung alone.
Fairer ſhe ſeem'd diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt,
And better mien diſclos'd, as better dreſt:
A bright tiara round her forehead ty'd,
To juſter bounds confin'd its riſing pride;
The bluſhing ruby on her ſnowy breaſt,
Render'd its panting whiteneſs more confeſt;
Bracelets of pearl gave roundneſs to her arm,
And ev'ry gem augmented ev'ry charm:
Her ſenſes pleas'd, her beauty ſtill improv'd,
And ſhe more lovely grew as more belov'd.

And now I could behold, avow, and blame,
The ſeveral follies of my former flame,
Willing my heart for recompenſe to prove
The certain joys that lie in proſp'rous love.
For what, ſaid I, from Abra can I fear,
Too humble to inſult, too ſoft to be ſevere?
The damſel's ſole ambition is to pleaſe;
With freedom I may like, and quit with eaſe:

She ſooths, but never can enthral my mind:
Why may not peace and love for once be join'd?
Great Heav'n! how frail thy creature man is made!
How by himſelf inſenſibly betray'd!
In our own ſtrength unhappily ſecure,
Too little cautious of the adverſe pow'r,
And by the blaſt of ſelf-opinion mov'd,
We wiſh to charm, and ſeek to be belov'd.
On Pleaſure's flowing brink we idly ſtray,
Maſters as yet of our returning way;
Seeing no danger, we diſarm our mind,
And give our conduct to the waves and wind;
Then in the flow'ry mead or verdant ſhade
To wanton dalliance negligently laid,
We weave the chaplet and we crown the bowl,
And ſmiling ſee the nearer waters roll,
Till the ſtrong guſts of raging paſſion riſe,
Till the dire tempeſt mingles earth and ſkies,
And ſwift into the boundleſs ocean borne,
Our fooliſh confidence too late we mourn;
Round our devoted heads the billows beat,
And from our troubled view the leſſen'd lands retreat.
O mighty Love! from thy unbounded pow'r
How ſhall the human boſom reſt ſecure?
How ſhall our thought avoid the various ſnare,
Or wiſdom to our caution'd ſoul declare
The diff'rent ſhapes thou pleaſeſt to employ
When bent to hurt, and certain to deſtroy?

The haughty nymph, in open beauty dreſt,
To-day encounters our unguarded breaſt;
She looks with majeſty, and moves with ſtate:
Unbent her ſoul, and in misfortune great,
She ſcorns the world, and dares the rage of Fate.
Here whilſt we take ſtern manhood for our guide,
And guard our conduct with becoming pride,
Charm'd with the courage in her action ſhown,
We praiſe her mind, the image of our own.
She that can pleaſe is certain to perſuade;
To-day belov'd, to-morrow is obey'd.
We think we ſee thro' Reaſon's optics right,
Nor find how Beauty's rays elude our ſight:
Struck with her eye whilſt we applaud her mind,
And when we ſpeak her great we wiſh her kind.
To-morrow, cruel Pow'r! thou arm'ſt the fair
With flowing ſorrow and diſhevell'd hair:
Sad her complaint, and humble is her tale,
Her ſighs explaining where her accents fail:
Here gen'rous ſoftneſs warms the honeſt breaſt;
We raiſe the ſad, and ſuccour the diſtreſt,
And whilſt our wiſh prepares the kind relief,
Whilſt pity mitigates her riſing grief,
We ſicken ſoon from her contagious care,
Grieve for her ſorrows, groan for her deſpair,
And againſt love, too late, thoſe boſoms arm
Which tears can ſoften, and which ſighs can warm.
Againſt this neareſt, crueleſt of foes,
What ſhall wit meditate or force oppoſe?

Whence, feeble Nature, ſhall we ſummon aid,
If by our pity and our pride betray'd?
External remedy ſhall we hope to find,
When the cloſe fiend has gain'd our treach'rous mind,
Inſulting there does Reaſon's pow'r deride,
And, blind himſelf, conducts the dazzled guide?
My conqu'ror now, my lovely Abra, held
My freedom in her chains; my heart was fill'd
With her, with her alone; in her alone
It ſought its peace and joy: while ſhe was gone
It ſigh'd, and griev'd, impatient of her ſtay;
Return'd, ſhe chas'd thoſe ſighs, that grief, away:
Her abſence made the night; her preſence brought the day.
The ball, the play, the maſk, by turns ſucceed:
For her I make the ſong; the dance with her I lead:
I court her, various, in each ſhape and dreſs
That luxury may form or thought expreſs.
To-day beneath the palm-tree, on the plains,
In Deborah's arms and habit Abra reigns:
The wreath, denoting conqueſt, guides her brow,
And low, like Barak, at her feet I bow.
The mimic Chorus ſings her proſp'rous hand,
As ſhe had ſlain the foe and ſav'd the land.
To-morrow ſhe approves a ſofter air,
Forſakes the pomp and pageantry of war,
The form of peaceful Abigail aſſumes,
And from the village with the preſent comes:

The youthful band depoſe their glitt'ring arms,
Receive her bounties and recite her charms,
Whilſt I aſſume my father's ſtep and mien,
To meet, with due regard, my future queen.
If hap'ly Abra's will be now inclin'd
To range the woods or chaſe the flying hind,
Soon as the ſun awakes, the ſprightly court
Leave their repoſe, and haſten to the ſport.
In leſſen'd royalty, and humble ſtate,
Thy king, Jeruſalem! deſcends to wait
Till Abra comes. She comes; a milk-white ſteed,
Mixture of Perſia's and Arabia's breed,
Suſtains the nymph: her garments flying looſe
(As the Sydonian maids or Thracian uſe)
And half her knee and half her breaſt appear,
By art, like negligence, diſclos'd, and bare.
Her left hand guides the hunting courſer's flight,
A ſilver bow ſhe carries in her right,
And from the golden quiver at her ſide,
Ruſtles the ebon arrow's feather'd pride;
Saphires and diamonds on her front diſplay
An artificial moon's increaſing ray.
Diana, huntreſs, miſtreſs of the groves,
The fav'rite Abra ſpeaks, and looks, and moves.
Her, as the preſent goddeſs, I obey,
Beneath her feet the captive game I lay;
The mingled Chorus ſing Diana's fame,
Clarions and horns in louder peals proclaim

Her myſtic praiſe, the vocal triumphs bound
Againſt the hills; the hills reflect the ſound.
If, tir'd this ev'ning with the hunted woods,
To the large fiſh-pools or the glaſſy floods
Her mind to-morrow points, a thouſand hands
To-night employ'd obey the King's commands.
Upon the wat'ry beach an artful pile
Of planks is join'd, and forms a moving iſle;
A golden chariot in the midſt is ſet,
And ſilver cygnets ſeem to feel its weight.
Abra, bright queen, aſcends her gaudy throne,
In ſemblance of the Grecian Venus known;
Tritons and ſea-green naiads round her move,
And ſing in moving ſtrains the force of love;
Whilſt, as th' approaching pageant does appear,
And echoing crowds ſpeak mighty Venus near,
I, her adorer, too devoutly ſtand
Faſt on the utmoſt margin of the land,
With arms and hopes extended, to receive
The fancy'd goddeſs riſing from the wave.
O ſubject Reaſon! O imperious Love!
Whither yet further would my folly rove?
Is it enough that Abra ſhould be great
In the wall'd palace or the rural ſeat;
That maſking habits, and a borrow'd name,
Contrive to hide my plenitude of ſhame?
No, no: Jeruſalem combin'd muſt ſee
My open fault and regal infamy.

Solemn a month is deſtin'd for the feaſt;
Abra invites; the nation is the gueſt.
To have the honour of each day ſuſtain'd,
The woods are travers'd, and the lakes are drain'd:
Arabia's wilds and Egypt's are explor'd;
The edible creation decks the board:
Hardly the phenix 'ſcapes———
The men their lyres the maids their voices raiſe,
To ſing my happineſs and Abra's praiſe,
And ſlaviſh bards our mutual loves rehearſe
In lying ſtrains and ignominious verſe;
While from the banquet leading forth the bride,
Whom prudent love from public eyes ſhould hide,
I ſhow her to the world, confeſs'd and known
Queen of my heart and part'ner of my throne.

And now her friends and flatt'rers fill the court;
From Dan and from Beerſheba they reſort;
They barter places and diſpoſe of grants,
Whole provinces unequal to their wants;
They teach her to recede or to debate;
With toys of love to mix affairs of ſtate;
By practis'd rules her empire to ſecure,
And in my pleaſure make my ruin ſure.
They gave and ſhe transferr'd the curs'd advice,
That monarchs ſhould their inward ſoul diſguiſe,
Diſſemble and command, be falſe and wiſe;
By ignominious arts, for ſervile ends,
Should compliment their foes and ſhun their friends.

And now I leave the true and juſt ſupports
Of legal princes and of honeſt courts,
Barzillai's and the fierce Benaiah's heirs,
Whoſe ſires, great part'ners in my father's cares,
Saluted their young king, at Hebron crown'd,
Great by their toil, and glorious by their wound:
And now, unhappy counſel, I prefer
Thoſe whom my follies only made me fear,
Old Corah's brood and taunting Shimei's race,
Miſcreants who ow'd their lives to David's grace,
Tho' they had ſpurn'd his rule and curs'd him to his face.
Still Abra's pow'r, my ſcandal, ſtill increas'd;
Juſtice ſubmitted to what Abra pleas'd:
Her will alone could ſettle or revoke,
And law was fix'd by what ſhe lateſt ſpoke.
Iſrael neglected, Abra was my care;
I only acted, thought, and liv'd for her.
I durſt not reaſon with my wounded heart;
Abra poſſeſs'd; ſhe was its better part.
O! had I now review'd the famous cauſe
Which gave my righteous youth ſo juſt applauſe,
In vain on the diſſembled mother's tongue
Had cunning art and ſly perſuaſion hung,
And real care in vain, and native love,
In the true parent's panting breaſt had ſtrove,
While both deceiv'd had ſeen the deſtin'd child
Or ſlain or ſav'd, as Abra frown'd or ſmil'd.

Unknowing to command, proud to obey,
A lifeleſs king, a royal ſhade I lay.
Unheard the injur'd orphans now complain;
The widows' cries addreſs the throne in vain.
Cauſes unjudg'd diſgrace the loaded file,
And ſleeping laws the king's neglect revile.
No more the Elders throng'd around my throne,
To hear my maxims and reform their own;
No more the young nobility were taught
How Moſes govern'd and how David fought.
Looſe and undiſciplin'd the ſoldier lay,
Or loſt in drink and game the ſolid day;
Porches and ſchools, deſign'd for public good,
Uncover'd, and with ſcaffolds cumber'd ſtood,
Or nodded, threat'ning ruin—
Half pillars wanted their expected height,
And roofs imperfect prejudic'd the ſight.
The artiſts grieve; the lab'ring people droop:
My father's legacy, my country's hope,
God's temples, lie unfiniſh'd—
The wiſe and grave deplor'd their monarch's fate,
And future miſchiefs of a ſinking ſtate.
Is this, the ſerious ſaid, is this the man
Whoſe active ſoul thro' ev'ry ſcience ran?
Who by juſt rule and elevated ſkill
Preſcrib'd the dubious bounds of good and ill?
Whoſe golden ſayings, and immortal wit,
On large phylacteries expreſſive writ,

Were to the forehead of the Rabbins ty'd,
Our youth's inſtruction, and our age's pride?
Could not the wife his wild deſires reſtrain?
Then was our hearing and his preaching vain!
What from his life and letters were we taught,
But that his knowledge aggravates his fault?
In lighter mood, the hum'rous and the gay
(As crown'd with roſes at their feaſts they lay)
Sent the full goblet charg'd with Abra's name,
And charms ſuperior to their maſter's fame.
Laughing ſome praiſe the King, who let 'em ſee
How aptly luxe and empire might agree:
Some gloſs'd how love and wiſdom were at ſtrife,
And brought my Proverbs to confront my life.
However, Friend, here's to the King, one cries:
To him who was the King, the friend replies.
The King, for Judah's and for wiſdom's curſe
To Abra yields: could I or thou do worſe?
Our looſer lives let Chance or Folly ſteer,
If thus the prudent and determin'd err.
Let Dinah bind with flow'rs her flowing hair,
And touch the lute and ſound the wanton air,
Let us the bleſs without the ſting receive,
Free as we will or to enjoy or leave.
Pleaſures on Levity's ſmooth ſurface flow;
Thought brings the weight that ſinks the ſoul to woe.
Now be this maxim to the King convey'd,
And added to the thouſand he has made.

Sadly, O Reaſon, is thy pow'r expreſt,
Thou gloomy tyrant of the frighted breaſt!
And harſh the rules which we from thee receive,
If for our wiſdom we our pleaſure give,
And more to think be only more to grieve:
If Judah's king, at thy tribunal try'd,
Forſakes his joy to vindicate his pride,
And, changing ſorrows, I am only found [bound.
Loos'd from the chains of love, in thine more ſtrictly

But do I call thee tyrant, or complain
How hard thy laws, how abſolute thy reign?
While thou, alas! art but an empty name,
To no two men, who e'er diſcours'd, the ſame;
The idle product of a troubled thought,
In borrow'd ſhapes and airy colours wrought;
A fancy'd line, and a reflected ſhade;
A chain which man to fetter man has made,
By artifice impos'd, by fear obey'd.

Yet, wretched name, or arbitrary thing,
Whence-ever I thy cruel eſſence bring,
I own thy influence, for I feel thy ſting.
Reluctant I perceive thee in my ſoul,
Form'd to command, and deſtin'd to control.
Yes, thy inſulting dictates ſhall be heard;
Virtue for once ſhall be her own reward:
Yes, rebel Iſrael, this unhappy maid
Shall be diſmiſs'd; the crowd ſhall be obey'd:
The King his paſſion and his rule ſhall leave,
No longer Abra's but the people's ſlave:

My coward ſoul ſhall bear its wayward fate;
I will, alas! be wretched to be great,
And ſigh in royalty, and grieve in ſtate.
I ſaid, reſolv'd to plunge into my grief
At once ſo far as to expect relief
From my deſpair alone——
I choſe to write the thing I durſt not ſpeak
To her I lov'd, to her I muſt forſake.
The harſh epiſtle labour'd much to prove
How inconſiſtent majeſty and love.
I always ſhould, it ſaid, eſteem her well,
But never ſee her more: it bid her feel
No future pain for me; but inſtant wed
A lover more proportion'd to her bed,
And quiet dedicate her remnant life
To the juſt duties of an humble wife.
She read, and forth to me ſhe wildly ran,
To me, the eaſe of all her former pain.
She kneel'd, entreated, ſtruggled, threaten'd, cry'd,
And with alternate paſſion liv'd and dy'd;
Till now deny'd the liberty to mourn,
And by rude fury from my preſence torn,
This only object of my real care
Cut off from hope, abandon'd to deſpair,
In ſome few poſting fatal hours is hurl'd [world.
From wealth, from pow'r, from love, and from the
Here tell me, if thou dar'ſt, my conſcious Soul,
What diff'rent ſorrows did within thee roll?

What pangs, what fires, what racks, didſt thou ſuſtain?
What ſad viciſſitudes of ſmarting pain?
How oft' from pomp and ſtate did I remove,
To feed deſpair and cheriſh hopleſs love?
How oft', all day, recall'd I Abra's charms,
Her beauties preſs'd, and panting in my arms?
How oft', with ſighs, view'd ev'ry female face
Where mimic Fancy might her likeneſs trace?
How oft' deſir'd to fly from Iſrael's throne,
And live in ſhades with her and Love alone?
How oft', all night, purſu'd her in my dreams,
O'er flow'ry vallies and thro' cryſtal ſtreams,
And, waking, view'd with grief the riſing ſun,
And fondly mourn'd the dear deluſion gone?
When thus the gather'd ſtorms of wretched love
In my ſwoll'n boſom with long war had ſtrove,
At length they broke their bounds; at length their force
Bore down whatever met its ſtronger courſe;
Laid all the civil bonds of manhood waſte,
And ſcatter'd ruin as the torrent paſt.
So from the hills, whoſe hollow caves contain
The congregated ſnow and ſwelling rain,
Till the full ſtores their ancient bounds diſdain,
Precipitate the furious torrent flows:
In vain would ſpeed avoid or ſtrength oppoſe:
Towns, foreſts, herds, and men, promiſcuous drown'd,
With one great death deform the dreary ground;
The echo'd woes from diſtant rocks reſound.

And now what impious ways my wiſhes took,
How they the monarch and the man forſook,
And how I follow'd an abandon'd will,
Thro' crooked paths and ſad retreats of ill;
How Judah's daughters now, now foreign ſlaves,
By turns my proſtituted bed receives,
Thro' tribes of women how I looſely rang'd
Impatient, lik'd to-night, to-morrow chang'd,
And by the inſtinct of capricious luſt
Enjoy'd, diſdain'd, was grateful or unjuſt;
O, be theſe ſcenes from human eyes conceal'd,
In clouds of decent ſilence juſtly veil'd!
O, be the wanton images convey'd
To black oblivion and eternal ſhade!
Or let their ſad epitome alone,
And outward lines, to future age be known,
Enough to propagate the ſure belief
That vice engenders ſhame, and folly broods o'er grief.
Bury'd in ſloth and loſt in eaſe I lay;
The night I revell'd, and I ſlept the day.
New heaps of fuel damp'd my kindling fires,
And daily change extinguiſh'd young deſires.
By its own force deſtroy'd, fruition ceas'd;
And always weary'd, I was never pleas'd.
No longer now does my neglected mind
Its wonted ſtores and old ideas find.
Fix'd Judgment there no longer does abide,
To take the true, or ſet the falſe aſide,

No longer does ſwift Mem'ry trace the cells
Where ſpringing Wit or young Invention dwells,
Frequent debauch to habitude prevails;
Patience of toil and love of virtue fails.
By ſad degrees impair'd my vigour dies,
Till I command no longer e'en in vice.
The women on my dotage build their ſway:
They aſk; I grant: they threaten; I obey.
In regal garments now I gravely ſtride,
Aw'd by the Perſian damſels' haughty pride;
Now with the looſer Syrian dance and ſing,
In robes tuck'd up, opprobrious to the king.
Charm'd by their eyes, their manners I acquire,
And ſhape my fooliſhneſs to their deſire;
Seduc'd and aw'd by the Philiſtine dame,
At Dagon's ſhrine I kindle impious flame.
With the Chaldean's charms her rites prevail,
And curling frankincenſe aſcends to Baal.
To each new harlot I new altars dreſs,
And ſerve her god whoſe perſon I careſs.
Where, my deluded Senſe, was Reaſon flown?
Where the high majeſty of David's throne?
Where all the maxims of eternal truth,
With which the living God inform'd my youth,
When with the lewd Egyptian I adore
Vain idols, deities that ne'er before
In Iſrael's land had fix'd their dire abodes,
Beaſtly divinities, and droves of gods;

Oſiris, Apis, pow'rs that chew the cud,
And dog Anubis, flatt'rer for his food?
When in the woody hills' forbidden ſhade
I carv'd the marble and invok'd its aid:
When in the fens to ſnakes and flies, with zeal
Unworthy human thought, I proſtrate fell;
To ſhrubs and plants my vile devotion paid,
And ſet the bearded leek to which I pray'd;
When to all beings ſacred rites were giv'n,
Forgot the Arbiter of earth and heav'n?
Thro' theſe ſad ſhades, this chaos in my ſoul,
Some ſeeds of light at length began to roll:
The riſing motion of an infant ray
Shot glimm'ring thro' the cloud, and promis'd day.
And now one moment able to reflect,
I found the King abandon'd to neglect,
Seen without awe, and ſerv'd without reſpect.
I found my ſubjects amicably join
To leſſen their defects by citing mine.
The prieſt with pity pray'd for David's race,
And left his text to dwell on my diſgrace.
The father, whilſt he warn'd his erring ſon,
The ſad examples which he ought to ſhun
Deſcrib'd, and only nam'd not Solomon.
Each bard, each ſire, did to his pupil ſing,
A wiſe child better than a fooliſh king.
Into myſelf my reaſon's eye I turn'd,
And as I much reflected, much I mourn'd.

A mighty king I am, an earthly god,
Nations obey my word and wait my nod;
I raiſe or ſink, impriſon or ſet free,
And life or death depends on my decree.
Fond the idea, and the thought is vain;
O'er Judah's king ten thouſand tyrants reign,
Legions of luſt, and various pow'rs of ill
Inſult the maſter's tributary will,
And he from whom the nations ſhould receive
Juſtice and freedom, lies himſelf a ſlave,
Tortur'd by cruel change of wild deſires,
Laſh'd by mad rage, and ſcorch'd by brutal fires.
O Reaſon! once again to thee I call,
Accept my ſorrow, and retrieve my fall.
Wiſdom, thou ſay'ſt, from Heav'n receiv'd her birth,
Her beams tranſmitted to the ſubject earth:
Yet this great empreſs of the human ſoul
Does only with imagin'd pow'r control,
If reſtleſs paſſion, by rebellious ſway,
Compels the weak uſurper to obey.
O troubled, weak, and coward, as thou art,
Without thy poor advice the lab'ring heart
To worſe extremes with ſwifter ſteps would run,
Not ſav'd by virtue, yet by vice undone.
Oft' have I ſaid, The praiſe of doing well
Is to the ear as ointment to the ſmell.
Now if ſome flies perchance, however ſmall,
Into the alabaſter urn ſhould fall,

The odours of the ſweets inclos'd would die,
And ſtench corrupt (ſad change!) their place ſupply:
So the leaſt faults, if mix'd with faireſt deed,
Of future ill become the fatal ſeed;
Into the balm of pureſt virtue caſt,
Annoy all life with one contagious blaſt.
Loſt Solomon! purſue this thought no more;
Of thy paſt errors recollect the ſtore;
And ſilent weep, that while the deathleſs Muſe
Shall ſing the juſt, ſhall o'er their head diffuſe
Perfumes with laviſh hand, ſhe ſhall proclaim
Thy crimes alone, and to thy evil fame
Impartial, ſcatter damps and poiſons on thy name.
Awaking therefore, as who long had dream'd,
Much of my women and their gods aſham'd,
From this abyſs of exemplary vice
Reſolv'd, as time might aid my thought, to riſe,
Again I bid the mournful goddeſs write
The fond purſuit of fugitive delight;
Bid her exalt her melancholy wing,
And, rais'd from earth, and ſav'd from paſſion, ſing
Of human hope by croſs event deſtroy'd,
Of uſeleſs wealth and greatneſs unenjoy'd;
Of luſt and love, with their fantaſtic train,
Their wiſhes, ſmiles, and looks deceitful all, and vain.

POWER.

BOOK III.

TEXTS CHIEFLY ALLUDED TO IN THIS BOOK.

OR ever the ſilver cord be looſed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the ciſtern, Eccleſ. chap. xii, *ver.* 6.

The ſun alſo ariſeth, and the ſun goeth down, and haſteth to his place where he aroſe, chap. i. *ver.* 5.

The wind goeth towards the ſouth, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually: and the wind returneth again according to his circuits, ver. 6.

All the rivers run into the ſea; yet the ſea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again, ver. 7.

Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was; and the ſpirit ſhall return unto God who gave it, chap. xii. *ver.* 7.

Now, when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and conſumed the burnt-offering and the ſacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the houſe, 2 *Chron. chap.* vii. *ver.* 1.

By the rivers of Babylon there we ſat down; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion, &c. *Pſal.* cxxxvii. *ver.* 1.

I ſaid of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doth it? Eccleſ. chap. ii. *ver.* 2.

—*No man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end, chap.* iii. *ver.* 11.

—*Whatſoever God doeth, it ſhall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men ſhould fear before him, ver.* 14.

Let us hear the concluſion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man, chap. xii. *ver.* 13.

POWER.

BOOK III.

The Argument.

Solomon conſiders man through the ſeveral ſtages and conditions of life, and concludes, in general, that we are all miſerable. He reflects more particularly, upon the trouble and uncertainty of greatneſs and power; gives ſome inſtances thereof from Adam down to himſelf; and ſtill concludes that ALL IS VANITY. He reaſons again upon life, death, and a future being; finds human wiſdom too imperfect to reſolve his doubts; has recourſe to religion; is informed by an angel what ſhall happen to himſelf, his family, and his kingdom, till the redemption of Iſrael: and, upon the whole, reſolves to ſubmit his inquiries and anxieties to the will of his Creator.

COME, then, my Soul: I call thee by that name,
Thou buſy thing, from whence I know I am;
For knowing that I am I know thou art,
Since that muſt needs exiſt which can impart:
But how thou cam'ſt to be, or whence thy ſpring,
For various of thee prieſts and poets ſing?
  Hear'ſt thou ſubmiſſive, but a lowly birth,
Some ſecret particles of finer earth,
A plain effect which Nature muſt beget,
As motion orders, and as atoms meet,
Companion of the body's good or ill,
From force of inſtinct more than choice of will,

Conſcious of fear or valour, joy or pain,
As the wild courſes of the blood ordain;
Who as degrees of heat and cold prevail,
In youth doſt flouriſh, and with age ſhalt fail,
Till mingled with thy partner's lateſt breath
Thou fly'ſt diſſolv'd in air and loſt in death.
Or if thy great exiſtence would aſpire
To cauſes more ſublime, of heav'nly fire
Wer't thou a ſpark ſtruck off, a ſep'rate ray,
Ordain'd to mingle with terreſtrial clay,
With it condemn'd for certain years to dwell,
To grieve its frailties, and its pains to feel;
To teach it good and ill, diſgrace or fame,
Pale it with rage, or redden it with ſhame;
To guide its actions with informing care,
In peace to judge, to conquer in the war;
Render it agile, witty, valiant, ſage,
As fits the various courſe of human age,
Till as the earthly part decays and falls,
The captive breaks her priſon's mould'ring walls,
Hovers a while upon the ſad remains,
Which now the pile or ſepulchre contains,
And thence with liberty unbounded flies,
Impatient to regain her native ſkies?
Whate'er thou art, where'er ordain'd to go,
(Points which we rather may diſpute than know)
Come on, thou little inmate of this breaſt,
Which, for thy ſake, from paſſions I diveſt;

For theſe, thou ſay'ſt, raiſe all the ſtormy ſtrife
Which hinder thy repoſe, and trouble life;
Be the fair level of thy actions laid
As temp'rance wills and prudence may perſuade;
Be thy affections undiſturb'd and clear,
Guided to what may great or good appear,
And try if life be worth the liver's care.
Amaſs'd in man there juſtly is beheld
What thro' the whole creation has excell'd,
The life and growth of plants, of beaſts the ſenſe,
The angel's forecaſt and intelligence;
Say, from theſe glorious ſeeds what harveſt flows?
Recount our bleſſings, and compare our woes:
In its true light let cleareſt reaſon ſee
The man dragg'd out to act, and forc'd to be;
Helpleſs and naked, on a woman's knees
To be expos'd or rear'd as ſhe may pleaſe,
Feel her neglect, and pine from her diſeaſe:
His tender eye by too direct a ray
Wounded, and flying from unpractis'd day;
His heart aſſaulted by invading air,
And beating fervent to the vital war;
To his young ſenſe how various forms appear,
That ſtrike his wonder and excite his fear;
By his diſtortions he reveals his pains;
He by his tears and by his ſighs complains,
'Till time and uſe aſſiſt the infant wretch,
By broken words and rudiments of ſpeech

His wants in plainer characters to ſhow,
And paint more perfect figures of his woe,
Condemn'd to ſacrifice his childiſh years
To babbling ign'rance and to empty fears;
To paſs the riper period of his age,
Acting his part upon a crowded ſtage;
To laſting toils expos'd, and endleſs cares,
To open dangers, and to ſecret ſnares;
To malice which the vengeful foe intends,
And the more dang'rous love of ſeeming friends:
His deeds examin'd by the people's will,
Prone to forget the good and blame the ill;
Or, ſadly cenſur'd in their curs'd debate,
Who in the ſcorner's or the judge's ſeat
Dare to condemn the virtue which they hate:
Or would he rather leave this frantic ſcene,
And trees and beaſts prefer to courts and men,
In the remoteſt wood and lonely grott
Certain to meet that worſt of evils thought,
Diff'rent ideas to his mem'ry brought,
Some intricate, as are the pathleſs woods,
Impetuous ſome, as the deſcending floods;
With anxious doubts, with raging paſſions torn,
No ſweet companion near with whom to mourn,
He hears the echoing rock return his ſighs,
And from himſelf the frighted hermit flies.
Thus thro' what path ſoe'er of life we rove,
Rage companies our hate and grief our love;

Vex'd with the preſent moment's heavy gloom,
Why ſeek we brightneſs from the years to come?
Diſturb'd and broken, like a ſick man's ſleep,
Our troubled thoughts to diſtant proſpects leap,
Deſirous ſtill what flies us to o'ertake;
For hope is but the dream of thoſe that wake:
But, looking back, we ſee the dreadful train
Of woes a-new, which, were we to ſuſtain,
We ſhould refuſe to tread the path again:
Still adding grief, ſtill counting from the firſt,
Judging the lateſt evil ſtill the worſt,
And ſadly finding each progreſſive hour
Heighten their number and augment their pow'r,
'Till by one countleſs ſum of woes oppreſt,
Hoary with cares and ignorant of reſt,
We find the vital ſprings relax'd and worn,
Compell'd our common impotence to mourn:
Thus thro'the round of age to childhood we return;
Reflecting find, that naked from the womb
We yeſterday came forth; that in the tomb
Naked again we muſt to-morrow lie,
Born to lament, to labour, and to die.

Paſs we the ills which each man feels or dreads,
The weight or fall'n or hanging o'er our heads;
The bear, the lion, terrors of the plain,
The ſheepfold ſcatter'd, and the ſhepherd ſlain;
The frequent errors of the pathleſs wood,
The giddy precipice, and the dang'rous flood;

The noiſome peſt'lence, that in open war
Terrible, marches thro' the mid-day air,
And ſcatters death; the arrow that, by night,
Cuts the dank miſt, and, fatal, wings its flight;
The billowing ſnow, and violence of the ſhower,
That from the hills diſperſe their dreadful ſtore,
And o'er the vales collected ruin pour;
The worm that gnaws the ripening fruit, ſad gueſt,
Canker or locuſt, hurtful to infeſt
The blade; while huſks elude the tiller's care,
And eminence of want diſtinguiſhes the year.

Paſs we the ſlow diſeaſe and ſubtile pain
Which our weak frame is deſtin'd to ſuſtain;
The cruel ſtone, with congregated war
Tearing his bloody way; the cold catarrh,
With frequent impulſe and continu'd ſtrife
Weak'ning the waſted ſeats of irkſome life;
The gout's fierce rack, the burning fever's rage,
The ſad experience of decay, and age,
Herſelf the foreſt ill, while death and eaſe,
Oft' and in vain invok'd, or to appeaſe
Or end the grief, with haſty wings recede
From the vext patient and the ſickly bed.

Nought ſhall it profit that the charming fair,
Angelic, ſofteſt work of Heav'n, draws near
To the cold ſhaking paralytic hand,
Senſeleſs of Beauty's touch or Love's command,
Nor longer apt or able to fulfil
The dictates of its feeble maſter's will.

Nought ſhall the pſaltry and the harp avail,
The pleaſing ſong or well-repeated tale,
When the quick ſpirits their warm march forbear,
And numbing coldneſs has unbrac'd the ear.
The verdant riſing of the flow'ry hill,
The vale enamell'd, and the cryſtal rill,
The ocean rolling, and the ſhelly ſhore,
Beautiful objects, ſhall delight no more,
When the lax'd ſinews of the weaken'd eye,
In wat'ry damps or dim ſuffuſion lie.
Day follows night; the clouds return again
After the falling of the latter rain,
But to the aged blind ſhall ne'er return
Grateful viciſſitude; he ſtill muſt mourn
The ſun, and moon, and ev'ry ſtarry light
Eclips'd to him, and loſt in everlaſting night.
Behold where Age's wretched victim lies;
See his head trembling, and his half-clos'd eyes;
Frequent for breath his panting boſom heaves;
To broken ſleeps his remnant ſenſe he gives,
And only by his pains awaking, finds he lives.
Loos'd by devouring Time the ſilver cord
Diſſever'd lies; unhonour'd from the board
The cryſtal urn, when broken, is thrown by,
And apter utenſils their place ſupply.
Theſe things and thou muſt ſhare one equal lot;
Die, and be loſt, corrupt, and be forgot;
While ſtill another and another race
Shall now ſupply and now give up the place.

From earth all came, to earth muſt all return,
Frail as the cord, and brittle as the urn.
But be the terror of all theſe ills ſuppreſt,
And view we man with health and vigour bleſt.
Home he returns with the declining ſun,
His deſtin'd taſk of labour hardly done;
Goes forth again with the aſcending ray,
Again his travail for his bread to pay,
And find the ill ſufficient to the day.
Hap'ly at night he does with horror ſhun
A widow'd daughter or a dying ſon;
His neighbour's offspring he to-morrow ſees,
And doubly feels his want in their increaſe:
The next day, and the next, he muſt attend
His foe triumphant or his buried friend.
In ev'ry act and turn of life he feels
Public calamities or houſehold ills;
The due reward to juſt deſert refus'd,
The truſt betray'd, the nuptial bed abus'd;
The judge corrupt, the long-depending cauſe,
And doubtful iſſue of miſconſtru'd laws;
The crafty turns of a diſhoneſt ſtate,
And violent will of the wrong-doing great;
The venom'd tongue injurious to his fame,
Which nor can wiſdom ſhun nor fair advice reclaim.
Eſteem we theſe, my Friends, event and chance,
Produc'd as atoms form their flutt'ring dance?
Or higher yet their eſſence may we draw
From deſtin'd order and eternal law?

Again, my Muſe, the cruel doubt repeat;
Spring they, I ſay, from accident or Fate?
Yet ſuch, we find, they are as can control
The ſervile actions of our wav'ring ſoul;
Can fright, can alter, or can chain the will;
Their ills all built on life, that fundamental ill.
O fatal ſearch! in which the lab'ring mind,
Still preſs'd with weight of woe, ſtill hopes to find
A ſhadow of delight, a dream of peace,
From years of pain one moment of releaſe;
Hoping, at leaſt, ſhe may herſelf deceive,
Againſt experience willing to believe,
Deſirous to rejoice, condemn'd to grieve.

Happy the mortal man who now, at laſt,
Has thro' this doleful vale of mis'ry paſt,
Who to his deſtin'd ſtage has carry'd on
The tedious load, and laid his burden down;
Whom the cut braſs or wounded marble ſhows
Victor o'er Life, and all her train of woes:
He happier yet who, privileg'd by Fate
To ſhorter labour and a lighter weight,
Receiv'd but yeſterday the gift of breath,
Order'd to-morrow to return to death:
But, O! beyond deſcription happieſt he
Who ne'er muſt roll on life's tumultuous ſea;
Who with bleſs'd freedom from the gen'ral doom
Exempt, muſt never force the teeming womb,
Nor ſee the ſun, nor ſink into the tomb.

Who breathes muſt ſuffer, and who thinks muſt mourn;
And he alone is bleſs'd who ne'er was born.
" Yet in thy turn, thou frowning Preacher, hear;
" Are not theſe general maxims too ſevere?
" Say, cannot pow'r ſecure its owner's bliſs?
" And is not wealth the potent fire of peace?
" Are victors bleſs'd with fame or kings with eaſe?"
I tell thee, life is but one common care,
And man was born to ſuffer and to fear.
" But is no rank, no ſtation, no degree,
" From this contagious taint of ſorrow free?"
None, Mortal, none: yet in a bolder ſtrain
Let me this melancholy truth maintain:
But hence, ye Worldly, and Profane, retire,
For I adapt my voice and raiſe my lyre
To notions not by vulgar ear receiv'd:
Ye ſtill muſt covet life and be deceiv'd;
Your very fear of death ſhall make ye try
To catch the ſhade of immortality,
Wiſhing on earth to linger, and to ſave
Part of its prey from the devouring grave;
To thoſe who may ſurvive ye to bequeath
Something entire, in ſpite of time and death;
A fancy'd kind of being to retrieve,
And in a book, or from a building live.
Falſe hope! vain labour! let ſome ages fly,
The dome ſhall moulder and the volume die.
Wretches, ſtill taught, ſtill will ye think it ſtrange
That all the parts of this great fabric change,

Again, my Muſe, the cruel doubt repeat;
Spring they, I ſay, from accident or Fate?
Yet ſuch, we find, they are as can control
The ſervile actions of our wav'ring ſoul;
Can fright, can alter, or can chain the will;
Their ills all built on life, that fundamental ill.
O fatal ſearch! in which the lab'ring mind,
Still preſs'd with weight of woe, ſtill hopes to find
A ſhadow of delight, a dream of peace,
From years of pain one moment of releaſe;
Hoping, at leaſt, ſhe may herſelf deceive,
Againſt experience willing to believe,
Deſirous to rejoice, condemn'd to grieve.
Happy the mortal man who now, at laſt,
Has thro' this doleful vale of mis'ry paſt,
Who to his deſtin'd ſtage has carry'd on
The tedious load, and laid his burden down;
Whom the cut braſs or wounded marble ſhows
Victor o'er Life, and all her train of woes:
He happier yet who, privileg'd by Fate
To ſhorter labour and a lighter weight,
Receiv'd but yeſterday the gift of breath,
Order'd to-morrow to return to death:
But, O! beyond deſcription happieſt he
Who ne'er muſt roll on life's tumultuous ſea;
Who with bleſs'd freedom from the gen'ral doom
Exempt, muſt never force the teeming womb,
Nor ſee the ſun, nor ſink into the tomb.

Who breathes muſt ſuffer, and who thinks muſt mourn;
And he alone is bleſs'd who ne'er was born.
" Yet in thy turn, thou frowning Preacher, hear;
" Are not theſe general maxims too ſevere?
" Say, cannot pow'r ſecure its owner's bliſs?
" And is not wealth the potent fire of peace?
" Are victors bleſs'd with fame or kings with eaſe?"
I tell thee, life is but one common care,
And man was born to ſuffer and to fear.
" But is no rank, no ſtation, no degree,
" From this contagious taint of ſorrow free?"
None, Mortal, none: yet in a bolder ſtrain
Let me this melancholy truth maintain:
But hence, ye Worldly, and Profane, retire,
For I adapt my voice and raiſe my lyre
To notions not by vulgar ear receiv'd:
Ye ſtill muſt covet life and be deceiv'd;
Your very fear of death ſhall make ye try
To catch the ſhade of immortality,
Wiſhing on earth to linger, and to ſave
Part of its prey from the devouring grave;
To thoſe who may ſurvive ye to bequeath
Something entire, in ſpite of time and death;
A fancy'd kind of being to retrieve,
And in a book, or from a building live.
Falſe hope! vain labour! let ſome ages fly,
The dome ſhall moulder and the volume die.
Wretches, ſtill taught, ſtill will ye think it ſtrange
That all the parts of this great fabric change,

Quit their old ſtation and primeval frame,
And loſe their ſhape, their eſſence, and their name?
Reduce the ſong; our hopes, our joys are vain;
Our lot is ſorrow, and our portion pain.
What pauſe from woe, what hopes of comfort bring
The name of wiſe or great, of judge or king?
What is a king? a man condemn'd to bear
The public burden of the nation's care;
Now crown'd, ſome angry faction to appeaſe,
Now falls a victim to the people's eaſe;
From the firſt blooming of his ill-taught youth
Nouriſh'd in flatt'ry and eſtrang'd from truth:
At home ſurrounded by a ſervile crowd
Prompt to abuſe, and in detraction loud;
Abroad begirt with men, and ſwords, and ſpears,
His very ſtate acknowledging his fears;
Marching amidſt a thouſand guards, he ſhows
His ſecret terror of a thouſand foes:
In war, however prudent, great, or brave,
To blind events and fickle chance a ſlave;
Seeking to ſettle what for ever flies,
Sure of the toil, uncertain of the prize.
But he returns with conqueſt on his brow,
Brings up the triumph, and abſolves the vow:
The captive generals to his carr are ty'd
The joyful citizens' tumultuous tide
Echoing his glory, gratify his pride.
What is this triumph? madneſs, ſhouts, and noiſe,
One great collection of the people's voice.

The wretches he brings back, in chains relate
What may to-morrow be the victor's fate:
The ſpoils and trophies borne before him ſhow
National loſs and epidemic woe,
Various diſtreſs, which he and his may know.
Does he not mourn the valiant thouſands ſlain,
The heroes, once the glory of the plain,
Left in the conflict of the fatal day,
Or the wolf's portion, or the vulture's prey?
Does he not weep the laurel which he wears,
Wet with the ſoldiers' blood and widows' tears?
See, where he comes, the darling of the war!
See millions crowding round the gilded carr!
In the vaſt joys of this ecſtatic hour,
And full fruition of ſucceſsful pow'r,
One moment and one thought might let him ſcan
The various turns of life, and fickle ſtate of man.
Are the dire images of ſad diſtruſt,
And popular change, obſcur'd amid the duſt
That riſes from the victor's rapid wheel?
Can the loud clarion or ſhrill fife repel
The inward cries of Care? can Nature's voice,
Plaintive, be drown'd, or leſſen'd in the noiſe,
Tho' ſhouts as thunder loud afflict the air,
Stun the birds, now releas'd, and ſhake the iv'ry chair?
Yon' crowd (he might reflect) yon' joyful crowd,
Pleas'd with my honours, in my praiſes loud,

(Should fleeting Vict'ry to the vanquiſh'd go,
Should ſhe depreſs my arms and raiſe the foe)
Would for that foe with equal ardour wait
At the high palace or the crowded gate,
With reſtleſs rage would pull my ſtatues down,
And caſt the braſs a-new to his renown.
O impotent deſire of worldly ſway!
That I, who make the triumph of to-day,
May of to-morrow's pomp one part appear,
Ghaſtly with wounds, and lifeleſs on the bier!
Then (vileneſs of mankind!) then of all theſe
Whom my dilated eye with labour ſees,
Would one, alas! repeat me good or great,
Waſh my pale body, or bewail my fate?
Or, march'd I chain'd behind the hoſtile carr,
The victor's paſtime, and the ſport of war,
Would one, would one his pitying ſorrow lend,
Or be ſo poor to own he was my friend?
Avails it then, O Reaſon, to be wiſe?
To ſee this cruel ſcene with quicker eyes?
To know with more diſtinction to complain,
And have ſuperior ſenſe in feeling pain?
Let us revolve, that roll with ſtricteſt eye
Where ſafe from time diſtinguiſh'd actions lie,
And judge if greatneſs be exempt from pain,
Or pleaſure ever may with pow'r remain.
Adam, great type, for whom the world was made,
The faireſt bleſſing to his arms convey'd,

A charming wife; and air, and ſea, and land,
And all that move therein, to his command
Render'd obedient: ſay, my penſive Muſe,
What did theſe golden promiſes produce?
Scarce taſting life, he was of joy bereav'd;
One day, I think, in Paradiſe he liv'd,
Deſtin'd the next his journey to purſue
Where wounding thorns and curſed thiſtles grew.
Ere yet he earns his bread, a-down his brow,
Inclin'd to earth, his lab'ring ſweat muſt flow;
His limbs muſt ake, with daily toils oppreſt,
Ere long-wiſh'd night brings neceſſary reſt:
Still viewing with regret his darling Eve,
He for her follies and his own muſt grieve.
Bewailing ſtill afreſh their hapleſs choice,
His ear oft' frighted with the imag'd voice
Of Heav'n when firſt it thunder'd, oft' his view,
Aghaſt, as when the infant lightning flew,
And the ſtern cherub ſtopp'd the fatal road,
Arm'd with the flames of an avenging God,
His younger ſon on the polluted ground,
Firſt fruit of death, lies plaintive of a wound
Giv'n by a brother's hand; his eldeſt birth
Flies, mark'd by Heav'n, a fugitive o'er earth:
Yet why theſe ſorrows heap'd upon the ſire,
Becomes nor man nor angel to inquire.

Each age ſinn'd on, and guilt advanc'd with time;
The ſon ſtill added to the father's crime;

Till God aroſe, and, great in anger, ſaid,
Lo! it repenteth me that man was made.
Withdraw thy light, thou Sun! be dark, ye Skies!
And from your deep abyſs, ye Waters, riſe!
The frighted angels heard th'Almighty Lord,
And o'er the earth, from wrathful viols, pour'd
Tempeſts and ſtorm, obedient to his word.
Mean time his providence to Noah gave
The guard of all that he deſign'd to ſave:
Exempt from general doom the patriarch ſtood,
Contemn'd the waves, and triumph'd o'er the flood.
The winds fall ſilent and the waves decreaſe;
The dove brings quiet, and the olive peace;
Yet ſtill his heart does inward ſorrow feel,
Which faith alone forbids him to reveal.
If on the backward world his views are caſt,
'Tis death diffus'd, and univerſal waſte.
Preſent (ſad proſpect!) can he ought deſcry
But (what affects his melancholy eye)
The beauties of the ancient fabric loſt,
In chains of craggy hill, or lengths of dreary coaſt?
While to high heav'n his pious breathings turn'd,
Weeping he hop'd, and ſacrificing mourn'd;
When of God's image only eight be found
Snatch'd from the wat'ry grave, and ſav'd from nations drown'd;
And of three ſons, the future hopes of earth,
The ſeed whence empires muſt receive their birth,

One he foreſees excluded heav'nly grace,
And mark'd with curſes fatal to his race.
Abraham, potent prince, the friend of God,
Of human ills muſt bear the deſtin'd load,
By blood and battles muſt his pow'r maintain,
And ſlay the monarchs ere he rules the plain;
Muſt deal juſt portions of a ſervile life
To a proud handmaid and a peeviſh wife;
Muſt with the mother leave the weeping ſon,
In want to wander and in wilds to groan;
Muſt take his other child, his age's hope,
To trembling Moriam's melancholy top,
Order'd to drench his knife in filial blood,
Deſtroy his heir, or diſobey his God.
Moſes beheld that God; but how beheld
The Deity, in radiant beams conceal'd,
And clouded in a deep abyſs of light?
While preſent, too ſevere for human ſight,
Nor ſtaying longer than one ſwift-wing'd night:
The following days, and months, and years, decreed
To fierce encounter, and to toilſome deed:
His youth with wants and hardſhips muſt engage,
Plots and rebellions muſt diſturb his age:
Some Corah ſtill aroſe, ſome rebel ſlave,
Prompter to ſink the ſtate than he to ſave,
And Iſrael did his rage ſo far provoke,
That what the Godhead wrote the prophet broke.

His voice ſcarce heard, his dictates ſcarce believ'd,
In camps, in arms, in pilgrimage, he liv'd,
And dy'd obedient to ſevereſt law,
Forbid to tread the Promis'd land he ſaw.
My father's life was one long line of care,
A ſcene of danger and a ſtate of war.
Alarm'd, expos'd his childhood muſt engage
The bear's rough gripe and foaming lion's rage.
By various turns his threaten'd youth muſt fear
Goliath's lifted ſword and Saul's emitted ſpear.
Forlorn he muſt, and perſecuted, fly,
Climb the ſteep mountain, in the cavern lie,
And often aſk, and be refus'd to die.
For ever from his manly toils are known
The weight of pow'r and anguiſh of a crown.
What tongue can ſpeak the reſtleſs monarch's woes,
When God and Nathan were declar'd his foes?
When ev'ry object his offence revil'd,
The huſband murder'd and the wife defil'd,
The parent's ſins impreſs'd upon the dying child?
What heart can think the grief which he ſuſtain'd,
When the King's crime brought vengeance on the land,
And the inexorable prophet's voice
Gave famine, plague, or war, and bid him fix his choice?
He dy'd; and, oh! may no reflexion ſhed
Its pois'nous venom on the royal dead:
Yet the unwilling truth muſt be expreſt
Which long has labour'd in this penſive breaſt;

Dying he added to my weight of care;
He made me to his crimes undoubted heir;
Left his unfiniſh'd murder to his ſon,
And Joab's blood entail'd on Judah's crown.
Young as I was I haſted to fulfil
The cruel dictates of my parent's will:
Of his fair deeds a diſtant view I took,
But turn'd the tube upon his faults to look;
Forgot his youth, ſpent in his country's cauſe,
His care of right, his rev'rence to the laws,
But could with joy his years of folly trace,
Broken and old in Bathſheba's embrace;
Could follow him where'er he ſtray'd from good,
And cite his ſad example, whilſt I trod
Paths open to deceit, and track'd with blood.
Soon docile to the ſecret acts of ill,
With ſmiles I could betray, with temper kill;
Soon in a brother could a rival view,
Watch all his acts, and all his ways purſue:
In vain for life he to the altar fled;
Ambition and Revenge have certain ſpeed.
Ev'n there, my Soul, ev'n there he ſhould have fell,
But that my int'reſt did my rage conceal.
Doubling my crime, I promiſe and deceive,
Purpoſe to ſlay, whilſt ſwearing to forgive.
Treaties, perſuaſions, ſighs, and tears are vain;
With a mean lie curs'd vengeance I ſuſtain,
Join fraud to force, and policy to pow'r,
Till of the deſtin'd fugitive ſecure,

In ſolemn ſtate to parricide I riſe,
And, as God lives, this day my brother dies.
Be witneſs to my tears, celeſtial Muſe!
In vain I would forget, in vain excuſe
Fraternal blood by my direction ſpilt;
In vain on Joab's head transfer the guilt:
The deed was acted by the ſubject's hand,
The ſword was pointed by the King's command:
Mine was the murder; it was mine alone:
Years of contrition muſt the crime atone;
Nor can my guilty ſoul expect relief
But from a long ſincerity of grief.
With an imperfect hand and trembling heart,
Her love of truth ſuperior to her art,
Already the reflecting Muſe has trac'd
The mournful figures of my actions paſt.
The penſive goddeſs has already taught
How vain is hope, and how vexatious thought;
From growing childhood to declining age,
How tedious every ſtep, how gloomy ev'ry ſtage.
This courſe of vanity almoſt complete,
Tir'd in the field of life, I hope retreat
In the ſtill ſhades of death; for dread, and pain,
And grief, will find their ſhafts elanc'd in vain,
And their points broke, retorted from the head,
Safe in the grave, and free among the dead.
Yet tell me, frighted Reaſon what is death?
Blood only ſtopp'd, and interrupted breath?

The utmoſt limit of a narrow ſpan,
And end of motion, which with life began?
As ſmoke that riſes from the kindling fires
Is ſeen this moment, and the next expires;
As empty clouds by riſing winds are toſt,
Their fleeting forms ſcarce ſooner found than loſt,
So vaniſhes our ſtate, ſo paſs our days,
So life but opens now, and now decays;
The cradle and the tomb, alas! ſo nigh,
To live is ſcarce diſtinguiſh'd from to die.
Cure of the miſer's wiſh and coward's fear,
Death only ſhews us what we knew was near.
With courage, therefore, view the pointed hour,
Dread not Death's anger, but expect his pow'r,
Nor Nature's law with fruitleſs ſorrow mourn,
But die, O mortal Man! for thou waſt born.
Cautious thro' doubt, by want of courage wiſe,
To ſuch advice the reas'ner ſtill replies.
Yet meaſuring all the long continued ſpace,
Ev'ry ſucceſſive day's repeated race,
Since Time firſt ſtarted from his priſtine goal,
Till he had reach'd that hour wherein my ſoul
Join'd to my body ſwell'd the womb, I was
(At leaſt I think ſo) nothing; muſt I paſs
Again to nothing when this vital breath
Ceaſing, conſigns me o'er to reſt and death?
Muſt the whole man, amazing thought! return
To the cold marble or contracted urn?

And never ſhall thoſe particles agree,
That were in life this individual he?
But ſever'd, muſt they join the general maſs,
Thro' other forms and ſhapes ordain'd to paſs,
Nor thought nor image kept of what he was?
Does the great Word, that gave him ſenſe, ordain
That life ſhall never wake that ſenſe again?
And will no pow'r his ſinking ſpirits ſave [grave?
From the dark caves of death, and chambers of the

Each ev'ning I behold the ſetting ſun
With downward ſpeed into the ocean run;
Yet the ſame light (paſs but ſome fleeting hours)
Exerts his vigour and renews his pow'rs;
Starts the bright race again: his conſtant flame
Riſes and ſets, returning ſtill the ſame.
I mark the various fury of the winds,
Theſe neither ſeaſons guide nor order binds;
They now dilate, and now contract their force;
Various their ſpeed, but endleſs is their courſe.
From his firſt fountain and beginning, ouze
Down to the ſea each brook and torrent flows;
Tho' ſundry drops or leave or ſwell the ſtream,
The whole ſtill runs, with equal pace the ſame;
Still other waves ſupply the riſing urns,
And the eternal flood no want of water mourns.

Why then muſt man obey the ſad decree,
Which ſubjects neither ſun, nor wind, nor ſea?

A flower, that does with op'ning morn ariſe,
And, flouriſhing the day, at evening dies;

A winged eaſtern blaſt, juſt ſkimming o'er
The ocean's brow, and ſinking on the ſhore;
A fire, whoſe flames thro' crackling ſtubble fly;
A meteor ſhooting from the ſummer ſky;
A bowl a-down the bending mountain roll'd;
A bubble breaking, and a fable told;
A noontide ſhadow, and a midnight dream,
Are emblems which with ſemblance apt proclaim
Our earthly courſe; but, O my Soul! ſo faſt
Muſt life run off, and death for ever laſt!
This dark opinion, ſure, is too confin'd,
Elſe whence this hope and terror of the mind?
Does ſomething ſtill, and ſomewhere, yet remain,
Reward or puniſhment, delight or pain?
Say, ſhall our relics ſecond birth receive?
Sleep we to wake, and only die to live?
When the ſad wife has clos'd her huſband's eyes,
And pierc'd the echoing vault with doleful cries,
Lies the pale corpſe not yet entirely dead,
The ſpirit only from the body fled,
The groſſer part of heat and motion void,
To be by fire, or worm, or time, deſtroy'd;
The ſoul, immortal ſubſtance, to remain
Conſcious of joy and capable of pain?
And if her acts have been directed well,
While with her friendly clay ſhe deign'd to dwell,
Shall ſhe with ſafety reach her priſtine ſeat,
Find her reſt endleſs, and her bliſs complete?

And while the buried man we idly mourn,
Do angels joy to ſee his better half return?
But if ſhe has deform'd this earthly life
With murd'rous rapine and ſeditious ſtrife,
Amaz'd, repuls'd, and by thoſe angels driv'n
From the ethereal ſeat and bliſsful heav'n,
In everlaſting darkneſs muſt ſhe lie,
Still more unhappy that ſhe cannot die?

Amid two ſeas, on one ſmall point of land,
Weary'd, uncertain, and amaz'd, we ſtand;
On either ſide our thoughts inceſſant turn,
Forward we dread, and looking back we mourn,
Loſing the preſent in this dubious haſte,
And loſt ourſelves betwixt the future and the paſt.

Theſe cruel doubts contending in my breaſt,
My reaſon ſtaggering and my hopes oppreſt,
Once more I ſaid, once more I will inquire
What is this little, agile, pervious fire,
This flutt'ring motion which we call the Mind,
How does ſhe act? and where is ſhe confin'd?
Have we the pow'r to guide her as we pleaſe?
Whence then thoſe evils that obſtruct our eaſe?
We happineſs purſue; we fly from pain;
Yet the purſuit, and yet the flight is vain;
And while poor Nature labours to be bleſt,
By day with pleaſure, and by night with reſt,
Some ſtronger pow'r eludes our fickly will,
Daſhes our riſing hope with certain ill,

And makes us, with reflective trouble, ſee
That all is deſtin'd which we fancy free.
That Pow'r ſuperior, then, which rules our mind,
Is his decree by human pray'r inclin'd?
Will he for ſacrifice our ſorrows eaſe?
And can our tears reverſe his firm decrees?
Then let religion aid where reaſon fails,
Throw loads of incenſe in to turn the ſcales,
And let the ſilent ſanctuary ſhow
What from the babbling ſchools we may not know,
How man may ſhun or bear his deſtin'd part of woe.
What ſhall amend, or what abſolve our fate?
Anxious we hover in a mediate ſtate
Betwixt infinity and nothing; bounds,
Or boundleſs terms, whoſe doubtful ſenſe confounds:
Unequal thought, whilſt all we apprehend
Is, that our hopes muſt riſe, our ſorrows end,
As our Creator deigns to be our friend.
I ſaid,—and inſtant bade the prieſts prepare
The ritual ſacrifice and ſolemn pray'r.
Select from vulgar herds, with garlands gay,
A hundred bulls aſcend the ſacred way:
The artful youth proceed to form the choir,
They breathe the flute, or ſtrike the vocal wire.
The maids in comely order next advance,
They beat the timbrel and inſtruct the dance:
Follows the choſen tribe, from Levi ſprung,
Chanting by juſt return the holy ſong.

Along the choir in ſolemn ſtate they paſt,
—The anxious King came laſt.
The ſacred hymn perform'd, my promis'd vow
I paid, and, bowing at the altar low,
Father of heav'n! I ſaid, and Judge of earth!
Whoſe word call'd out this univerſe to birth,
By whoſe kind pow'r and influencing care
The various creatures move, and live, and are;
But ceaſing once that care, withdrawn that pow'r,
They move (alas!) and live, and are no more;
Omniſcient Maſter, omnipreſent King,
To thee, to thee my laſt diſtreſs I bring.
Thou that canſt ſtill the raging of the ſeas,
Chain up the winds, and bid the tempeſts ceaſe,
Redeem my ſhipwreck'd ſoul from raging guſts
Of cruel paſſion and deceitful luſts;
From ſtorms of rage and dang'rous rocks of pride,
Let thy ſtrong hand this little veſſel guide
(It was thy hand that made it) thro' the tide
Impetuous of this life; let thy command
Direct my courſe, and bring me ſafe to land.
If, while this weary'd fleſh draws fleeting breath,
Not ſatisfy'd with life, afraid of death,
It haply be thy will that I ſhould know
Glimpſe of delight or pauſe from anxious woe,
From now, from inſtant now, great Sire! diſpel
The clouds that preſs my ſoul; from now reveal

A gracious beam of light; from now inſpire
My tongue to ſing, my hand to touch the lyre;
My open'd thought to joyous proſpects raiſe,
And for thy mercy let me ſing thy praiſe:
Or, if thy will ordains I ſtill ſhall wait
Some new hereafter and a future ſtate,
Permit me ſtrength my weight of woe to bear,
And raiſe my mind ſuperior to my care.
Let me, howe'er unable to explain
The ſecret lab'rinths of thy ways to man,
With humble zeal confeſs thy awful pow'r,
Still weeping hope, and wond'ring, ſtill adore:
So in my conqueſt be thy might declar'd,
And for thy juſtice be thy name rever'd.
My pray'r ſcarce ended, a ſtupendous gloom
Darkens the air; loud thunder ſhakes the dome:
To the beginning miracle ſucceed
An awful ſilence and religious dread.
Sudden breaks forth a more than common day;
The ſacred wood, which on the altar lay,
Untouch'd, unlighted glows—
Ambroſial odour, ſuch as never flows
From Arab's gum or the Sabæan roſe,
Does round the air evolving ſcents diffuſe:
The holy ground is wet with heav'nly dews:
Celeſtial muſic (ſuch Jeſſides' lyre,
Such Miriam's timbrel would in vain require)

Strikes to my thought thro' my admiring ear,
With ecſtaſy too fine, and pleaſure hard to bear:
And, lo! what ſees my raviſh'd eye? what feels
My wond'ring ſoul? an opening cloud reveals
An heav'nly form, embody'd and array'd
With robes of light. I heard; the angel ſaid,

Ceaſe, Man, of woman born, to hope relief
From daily trouble and continu'd grief.
Thy hope of joy deliver to the wind;
Suppreſs thy paſſions, and prepare thy mind.
Free and familiar with misfortune grow;
Be us'd to ſorrow and inur'd to woe.
By weak'ning toil and hoary age o'ercome,
See thy decreaſe, and haſten to thy tomb.
Leave to thy children tumult, ſtrife, and war,
Portions of toil and legacies of care:
Send the ſucceſſive ills thro' ages down,
And let each weeping father tell his ſon
That, deeper ſtruck, and more diſtinctly griev'd,
He muſt augment the ſorrows he receiv'd.

The child to whoſe ſucceſs thy hope is bound,
Ere thou art ſcarce interr'd or he is crown'd,
To luſt of arbitrary ſway inclin'd,
(That curſed poiſon to the prince's mind!)
Shall from thy dictates and his duty rove,
And loſe his great defence, his people's love:
Ill counſell'd, vanquiſh'd, fugitive, diſgrac'd,
Shall mourn the fame of Jacob's ſtrength effac'd:

Shall ſigh the King diminiſh'd, and the crown
With leſſen'd rays deſcending to his ſon:
Shall ſee the wreaths his grandſire knew to reap
By active toil and military ſweat,
Pining incline their ſickly leaves, and ſhed
Their falling honours from his giddy head:
By arms or pray'r unable to aſſwage
Domeſtic horror and inteſtine rage,
Shall from the victor and the vanquiſh'd fear,
From Iſrael's arrow and from Judah's ſpear:
Shall caſt his weary'd limbs on Jordan's flood, [blood.
By brothers' arms diſturb'd, and ſtain'd with kindred

Hence lab'ring years ſhall weep their deſtin'd race,
Charg'd with ill omens, ſully'd with diſgrace:
Time, by neceſſity compell'd, ſhall go
Thro' ſcenes of war, and epocha's of woe:
The empire leſſen'd, in a parted ſtream
Shall loſe its courſe—
Indulge thy tears; the Heathen ſhall blaſpheme;
Judah ſhall fall, oppreſs'd by grief and ſhame,
And men ſhall from her ruins know her fame.

New Egypts yet, and ſecond bonds remain,
A harſher Pharaoh, and a heavier chain.
Again, obedient to a dire command,
Thy captive ſons ſhall leave the Promis'd land;
Their name more low, their ſervitude more vile,
Shall on Euphrates' bank renew the grief of Nile.

Theſe pointed ſpires that wound the ambient ſky,
Inglorious change! ſhall in deſtruction lie
Low, levell'd with the duſt, their heights unknown,
Or meaſur'd by their ruin. Yonder throne,
For laſting glory built, deſign'd the ſeat
Of kings for ever bleſt, for ever great,
Remov'd by the invader's barb'rous hand,
Shall grace his triumph in a foreign land:
The tyrant ſhall demand yon' ſacred load
Of gold and veſſels ſet apart to God,
Then by vile hands to common uſe debas'd,
Shall ſend them flowing round his drunken feaſt,
With ſacrilegious taunt and impious jeſt.

Twice fourteen ages ſhall their way complete;
Empires by various turns ſhall riſe and ſet,
While thy abandon'd tribes ſhall only know
A diff'rent maſter and a change of woe;
With downcaſt eyelids, and with looks aghaſt,
Shall dread the future or bewail the paſt.

Afflicted Iſrael ſhall ſit weeping down,
Faſt by the ſtreams where Babel's waters run,
Their harps upon the neighb'ring willows hung,
Nor joyous hymn encouraging their tongue,
Nor cheerful dance their feet; with toil oppreſt,
Their weary'd limbs aſpiring but to reſt.
In the reflective ſtream the ſighing bride,
Viewing her charms impair'd, abaſh'd ſhall hide

Her penſive head, and in her languid face
The bridegroom ſhall foreſee his ſickly race,
While pond'rous fetters vex their cloſe embrace.
With irkſome anguiſh then your prieſts ſhall mourn
Their long-neglected feaſts' deſpair'd return,
And ſad oblivion of their ſolemn days:
Thenceforth their voices they ſhall only raiſe,
Louder to weep. By day your frighted ſeers
Shall call for fountains to expreſs their tears,
And wiſh their eyes were floods: by night, from dreams
Of opening gulfs, black ſtorms, and raging flames,
Starting amaz'd, ſhall to the people ſhow
Emblems of heav'nly wrath, and myſtic types of woe.
The captives, as their tyrant ſhall require
That they ſhould breathe the ſong and touch the lyre,
Shall ſay, Can Jacob's ſervile race rejoice,
Untun'd the muſic, and diſus'd the voice?
What can we play (they ſhall diſcourſe) how ſing
In foreign lands, and to a barb'rous king?
We and our fathers, from our childhood bred
To watch the cruel victor's eye, to dread
The arbitrary laſh, to bend, to grieve,
(Outcaſt of mortal race) can we conceive
Image of ought delightful, ſoft, or gay?
Alas! when we have toil'd the longſome day,
The fulleſt bliſs our hearts aſpire to know,
Is but ſome interval from active woe;

In broken reſt and ſtartling ſleep to mourn,
Till morn the tyrant and the ſcourge return:
Bred up in grief, can pleaſure be our theme?
Our endleſs anguiſh does not Nature claim?
Reaſon and ſorrow are to us the ſame.
Alas! with wild amazement we require
If idle Folly was not Pleaſure's ſire?
Madneſs, we fancy, gave an ill-tim'd birth
To grinning Laughter and to frantic Mirth.
This is the ſeries of perpetual woe
Which thou, alas! and thine are born to know.
Illuſtrious wretch! repine not nor reply;
View not what Heav'n ordains with reaſon's eye;
Too bright the object is, the diſtance is too high.
The man who would reſolve the work of Fate,
May limit number and make crooked ſtraight:
Stop thy enquiry, then, and curb thy ſenſe,
Nor let duſt argue with Omnipotence.
'Tis God who muſt diſpoſe and man ſuſtain,
Born to endure, forbidden to complain:
Thy ſum of life muſt his decrees fulfil;
What derogates from his command is ill,
And that alone is good which centres in his will.
Yet that thy lab'ring ſenſes may not droop,
Loſt to delight and deſtitute of hope,
Remark what I, God's meſſenger, aver
From him who neither can deceive nor err.

The land, at length redeem'd, ſhall ceaſe to mourn,
Shall from her ſad captivity return:
Sion ſhall raiſe her long-dejected head,
And in her courts the law again be read:
Again the glorious Temple ſhall ariſe,
And with new luſtre pierce the neighb'ring ſkies:
The promis'd ſeat of empire ſhall again
Cover the mountain and command the plain;
And from thy race diſtinguiſh'd, One ſhall ſpring
Greater in act than victor, more than king;
In dignity and pow'r ſent down from Heav'n
To ſuccour earth. To him, to him 'tis giv'n
Paſſion, and care, and anguiſh, to deſtroy:
Thro' him ſoft peace and plenitude of joy
Perpetual o'er the world redeem'd ſhall flow;
No more may man inquire nor angel know.
Now, Solomon, rememb'ring who thou art,
Act thro' thy remnant life the decent part:
Go forth; be ſtrong; with patience and with care
Perform and ſuffer; to thyſelf ſevere,
Gracious to others, thy deſires ſuppreſt,
Diffus'd thy virtues, firſt of men, be beſt.
Thy ſum of duty let two words contain,
O may they graven in thy heart remain!
Be humble, and be juſt. The angel ſaid;
With upward ſpeed his agile wings be ſpread,
Whilſt on the holy ground I proſtrate lay,
By various doubts impell'd, or to obey

Or to object: at length (my mournful look
Heav'n-ward erect) determin'd, thus I ſpoke:
Supreme, all-wiſe, eternal Potentate!
Sole Author, ſole Diſpoſer of our fate!
Enthron'd in light and immortality,
Whom no man fully ſees, and none can ſee!
Original of Beings! Pow'r divine!
Since that I live, and that I think, is thine;
Benign Creator! let thy plaſtic hand
Diſpoſe its own effect: let thy command
Reſtore, great Father, thy inſtructed ſon,
And in my act may thy great will be done.

ALMA:

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF THE MIND.

IN THREE CANTOS.

Πάντα γέλως, καὶ πάντα κόνις, καὶ πάντα τὸ μηδὲν·
Πάντα γὰρ ἐξ ἀλόγων ἐστὶ τὰ γιγνόμενα.

Incert. ap. Stoboeum.

CANTO I.

MATTHEW met Richard, when or where
From ſtory is not mighty clear:
Of many knotty points they ſpoke,
And *pro* and *con* by turns they took:
Rats half the manuſcript have ate;
Dire hunger! which we ſtill regret;
O! may they ne'er again digeſt
The horrors of ſo ſad a feaſt:
Yet leſs our grief, if what remains,
Dear Jacob, by thy care and pains
Shall be to future times convey'd:
It thus begins;
* * * * Here Matthew ſaid,
Alma in verſe, in proſe, the mind,
By Ariſtotle's pen defin'd,
Throughout the body ſquat or tall,
Is *bonâ fide*, all in all:

And yet, ſlap daſh, is all again
In ev'ry ſinew, nerve, and vein;
Runs here and there, like Hamlet's ghoſt,
While every where ſhe rules the roaſt.

This ſyſtem, Richard, we are told
The men of Oxford firmly hold:
The Cambridge wits, you know, deny
With *ipſe dixit* to comply:
They ſay, (for in good truth they ſpeak
With ſmall reſpect of that old Greek)
That, putting all his words together,
'Tis three blue beans in one blue bladder.

Alma, they ſtrenuouſly maintain,
Sits cock-horſe on her throne, the brain,
And from that ſeat of thought diſpenſes
Her ſov'reign pleaſure to the ſenſes.
Two optic nerves, they ſay, ſhe ties,
Like ſpectacles, a-croſs the eyes,
By which the ſpirits bring her word
Whene'er the balls are fix'd or ſtirr'd;
How quick at Park and play they ſtrike;
The duke they court; the toaſt they like;
And at St. James's turn their grace
From former friends, now out of place.

Without theſe aids, to be more ſerious,
Her pow'r, they hold, had been precarious;
The eyes might have conſpir'd her ruin,
And ſhe not known what they were doing.

Fooliſh it had been, and unkind,
That they ſhould ſee and ſhe be blind.
Wiſe Nature likewiſe, they ſuppoſe,
Has drawn two conduits down our noſe:
Could Alma elſe with judgment tell
When cabbage ſtinks or roſes ſmell?
Or who would aſk for her opinion
Between an oyſter and an onion?
For from moſt bodies, Dick, you know,
Some little bits aſk leave to flow,
And as thro' theſe canals they roll,
Bring up a ſample of the whole;
Like footmen running before coaches,
To tell the inn what lord approaches.
By nerves about our palate plac'd,
She likewiſe judges of the taſte;
Elſe (diſmal thought!) our warlike men
Might drink thick Port for fine Champagne,
And our ill-judging wives and daughters
Miſtake ſmall-beer for citron-waters.
Hence, too, that ſhe might better hear,
She ſets a drum at either ear,
And loud or gentle, harſh or ſweet,
Are but the alarums which they beat.
Laſt, to enjoy her ſenſe of feeling,
(A thing ſhe much delights to deal in)
A thouſand little nerves ſhe ſends
Quite to our toes' and fingers' ends,

And theſe, in gratitude, again
Return their ſpirits to the brain,
In which their figure being printed
(As juſt before, I think, I hinted)
Alma inform'd can try the caſe,
As ſhe had been upon the place.
Thus while the judge gives diff'rent journies
To country counſel and attornies,
He on the bench in quiet ſits,
Deciding as they bring the writs.
The Pope thus prays and ſleeps at Rome,
And very ſeldom ſtirs from home,
Yet ſending forth his holy ſpies,
And having heard what they adviſe,
He rules the church's bleſt dominions,
And ſets men's faith by his opinions.
The ſcholars of the Stagyrite,
Who for the old opinion fight,
Would make their modern friends confeſs
The diff'rence but from more to leſs:
The Mind, ſay they, while you ſuſtain
To hold her ſtation in the brain,
You grant, at leaſt, ſhe is extended,
Ergo, the whole diſpute is ended:
For till to-morrow ſhould you plead
From form and ſtructure of the head,
The Mind as viſibly is ſeen
Extended thro' the whole machine.

Why ſhould all honour then be ta'en
From lower parts to load the brain,
When other limbs we plainly ſee
Each in his way as briſk as he?
For muſic, grant the head receives it,
It is the artiſt's hand that gives it:
And tho' the ſcull may wear the laurel,
The ſoldier's arm ſuſtains the quarrel.
Beſides, the noſtrils, ears, and eyes,
Are not his parts, but his allies:
Ev'n what you hear the tongue proclaim,
Comes *ab origine* from them.
What could the head perform alone,
If all their friendly aids were gone?
A fooliſh figure he muſt make,
Do nothing elſe but ſleep and ake.
Nor matters it that you can ſhow
How to the head the ſpirits go;
Thoſe ſpirits ſtarted from ſome goal,
Before they thro' the veins could roll;
Now we ſhould hold them much to blame,
If they went back before they came.
If, therefore, as we muſt ſuppoſe,
They came from fingers and from toes,
Or toes or fingers, in this caſe,
Of numſcull's ſelf ſhould take the place;
Diſputing fair you grant thus much,
That all ſenſation is but touch.

Dip but your toes into cold water,
Their correſpondent teeth will chatter;
And ſtrike the bottom of your feet,
You ſet your head into a heat.
The bully beat, and happy lover,
Confeſs that feeling lies all over.

Note here, Lucretius dares to teach
(As all our youth may learn from Creech)
That eyes were made but could not view,
Nor hands embrace nor feet purſue,
But heedleſs Nature did produce
The members firſt and then the uſe:
What each muſt act was yet unknown,
Till all is mov'd by Chance alone.

A man firſt builds a country-ſeat,
Then finds the walls not good to eat.
Another plants, and wond'ring ſees
Nor books nor medals on his trees.
Yet poet and philoſopher
Was he who durſt ſuch whims aver.
Bleſt, for his ſake, be human reaſon,
That came at all, tho' late, in ſeaſon.

But no man ſure e'er left his houſe,
And ſaddled Ball, with thoughts ſo wild
To bring a midwife to his ſpouſe
Before he knew ſhe was with child:
And no man ever reapt his corn,
Or from the oven drew his bread,

Ere hinds and bakers yet were born,
That taught them both to ſow and knead.
Before they 're aſk'd can maids refuſe?
Can—Pray, ſays Dick, hold in your Muſe,
While you Pindaric truths rehearſe,
She hobbles in alternate verſe.
Verſe! Matt. reply'd; is that my care?
Go on, quoth Richard, ſoft and fair.
This looks, friend Dick, as Nature had
But exercis'd the ſaleſman's trade;
As if ſhe haply had ſat down
And cut out clothes for all the Town,
Then ſent them out to Monmouth ſtreet,
To try what perſons they would fit;
But ev'ry free and licens'd tailor
Would in this theſis find a failure.
Should whims like theſe his head perplex,
How could he work for either ſex?
His clothes as atoms might prevail,
Might fit a piſmire or a whale.
No, no: he views with ſtudious pleaſure
Your ſhape before he takes your meaſure:
For real Kate he made the bodice,
And not for an ideal goddeſs.
No error near his ſhopboard lurk'd;
He knew the folks for whom he work'd:
Still to their ſize he aim'd his ſkill,
Elſe, pr'ythee, who would pay his bill?

Next, Dick, if Chance herſelf ſhould vary,
Obſerve how matters would miſcarry:
Acroſs your eyes, Friend, place your ſhoes,
Your ſpectacles upon your toes,
Then you and Memmius ſhall agree
How nicely men would walk or ſee.
But wiſdom, peeviſh and croſs-grain'd,
Muſt be oppos'd to be ſuſtain'd;
And ſtill your knowledge will increaſe,
As you make other people's leſs.
In arms and ſcience 'tis the ſame;
Our rivals' hurts create our fame.
At Faubert's, if diſputes ariſe
Among the champions for the prize,
To prove who gave the fairer butt,
John ſhows the chalk on Robert's coat.
So for the honour of your book,
It tells where other folks miſtook,
And as their notions you confound,
Thoſe you invent get farther ground.
The commentators on old Ari-
Stotle ('tis urg'd) in judgement vary:
They to their own conceits have brought
The image of his general thought,
Juſt as the melancholic eye
Sees fleets and armies in the ſky,
And to the poor apprentice ear
The bells ſound Whittington Lord May'r.

The conj'rer thus explains his ſcheme;
Thus ſpirits walk and prophets dream;
North Britons thus have ſecond ſight,
And Germans free from gunſhot fight.
Theodoret and Origen,
And fifty other learned men,
Atteſt that if their comments find
The traces of their maſter's mind,
Alma can ne'er decay nor die:
This flatly th' other ſect deny,
Simplicius, Theophraſt, Durand,
Great names, but hard in verſe to ſtand:
They wonder men ſhould have miſtook
The tenets of their maſter's book,
And hold that Alma yields her breath,
O'ercome by age, and ſeiz'd by death.
Now which were wiſe? and which were fools?
Poor Alma ſits between two ſtools;
The more ſhe reads the more perplext,
The comment ruining the text:
Now fears, now hopes her doubtful fate:
But, Richard, let her look to that—
Whilſt we our own affairs purſue.
Theſe diff'rent ſyſtems, old or new,
A man with half an eye may ſee
Were only form'd to diſagree.
Now to bring things to fair concluſion,
And ſave much Chriſtian ink's effuſion,

Let me propoſe an healing ſcheme,
And ſail along the middle ſtream;
For, Dick, if we could reconcile
Old Ariſtotle with Gaſſendus,
How many would admire our toil,
And yet how few would comprehend us?
Here, Richard, let my ſcheme commence:
Oh! may my words be loſt in ſenſe,
While pleaſed Thalia deigns to write
The ſlips and bounds of Alma's flight.
My ſimple ſyſtem ſhall ſuppoſe
That Alma enters at the toes;
That then ſhe mounts, by juſt degrees,
Up to the ancles, legs, and knees:
Next as the ſap of life does riſe,
She lends her vigour to the thighs;
And, all theſe under regions paſt,
She neſtles ſomewhere near the waiſt;
Gives pain or pleaſure, grief or laughter,
As we ſhall ſhow at large hereafter:
Mature, if not improv'd by time,
Up to the heart ſhe loves to climb;
From thence, compell'd by craft and age,
She makes the head her lateſt ſtage.
From the feet upward to the head,
Pithy, and ſhort, ſays Dick, proceed.
Dick, this is not an idle notion;
Obſerve the progreſs of the motion:

First I demonſtratively prove,
That feet were only made to move,
And legs deſire to come and go,
For they have nothing elſe to do.

Hence, long before the child can crawl,
He learns to kick, and wince, and ſprawl,
To hinder which, your midwife knows
To bind thoſe parts extremely cloſe,
Leſt Alma, newly enter'd in,
And ſtunn'd at her own chriſt'ning's din,
Fearful of future grief and pain,
Should ſilently ſneak out again.
Full piteous ſeems young Alma's caſe,
As in a luckleſs gameſter's place,
She would not play, yet muſt not paſs.

Again, as ſhe grows ſomething ſtronger,
And maſter's feet are ſwath'd no longer,
If in the night too oft' he kicks,
Or ſhows his *loco*-motive tricks,
Theſe firſt aſſaults fat Kate repays him,
When half-aſleep ſhe overlays him.

Now mark, dear Richard, from the age
That children tread this worldly ſtage,
Broomſtaff or poker they beſtride,
And round the parlour love to ride,
Till thoughtful father's pious care
Provides his brood, next Smithfield fair,
With ſupplemental hobbyhorſes,
And happy be their infant courſes!

Hence for ſome years they ne'er ſtand ſtill;
Their legs, you ſee, direct their will;
From op'ning morn till ſetting ſun
Around the fields and woods they run;
They friſk, and dance, and leap, and play,
Nor heed what Freind or Snape can ſay.
To her next ſtage as Alma flies,
And likes, as I have ſaid, the thighs,
With ſympathetic pow'r ſhe warms
Their good allies and friends, the arms;
While Betty dances on the green,
And Suſan is at ſtoolball ſeen;
While John for ninepins does declare,
And Roger loves to pitch the bar,
Both legs and arms ſpontaneous move,
Which was the thing I meant to prove.
Another motion now ſhe makes:
O, need I name the feat ſhe takes?
His thought quite chang'd the ſtripling finds;
The ſport and race no more he minds;
Neglected Tray and Pointer lie,
And covies unmoleſted fly:
Sudden the jocund plain he leaves,
And for the nymph in ſecret grieves:
In dying accents he complains
Of cruel fires and raging pains.
The nymph, too, longs to be alone,
Leaves all the ſwains and ſighs for one:

The nymph is warm'd with young deſire,
And feels, and dies to quench his fire.
They meet each ev'ning in the grove;
Their parley but augments their love;
So to the prieſt their caſe they tell;
He ties the knot, and all goes well.

But, O my Muſe, juſt diſtance keep,
Thou art a maid, and muſt not peep.
In nine month's time the bodice looſe,
And petticoats too ſhort, diſcloſe
That at this age the active mind
About the waiſt lies moſt confin'd,
And that young life and quick'ning ſenſe
Spring from his influence darted thence:
So from the middle of the world
The ſun's prolific rays are hurl'd;
'Tis from that ſeat he darts thoſe beams
Which quicken earth with genial flames.

Dick, who thus long had paſſive ſat,
Here ſtrok'd his chin and cock'd his hat,
Then ſlapp'd his hand upon the board,
And thus the youth put in his word.
Love's advocates, ſweet Sir, would find him
A higher place than you aſſign'd him.
Love's advocates, Dick, who are thoſe?—
The poets, you may well ſuppoſe.
I'm ſorry, Sir, you have diſcarded
The men with whom till now you herded.

Profemen alone, for private ends,
I though forſook their ancient friends.
In cor ſtillavit, cries Lucretius,
If he may be allow'd to teach us.
The ſelf-ſame thing ſoft Ovid ſays,
(A proper judge in ſuch a caſe.)
Horace his phraſe is *torret jecur*,
And happy was that curious ſpeaker.
Here Virgil, too, has plac'd this paſſion;
What ſignifies too long quotation?
In ode and epic plain the caſe is,
That Love holds one of theſe two places.
Dick, without paſſion or reflection,
I'll ſtraight demoliſh this objection.
Firſt, poets, all the world agrees,
Write half to profit half to pleaſe.
Matter and figure they produce,
For garniſh this, and that for uſe;
And, in the ſtructure of their feaſts,
They ſeek to feed and pleaſe their gueſts:
But one may baulk this good intent,
And take things otherwiſe than meant.
Thus, if you dine with my Lord May'r,
Roaſt beef and ven'ſon is your fare,
Thence you proceed to ſwan and buſtard,
And perſevere in tart and cuſtard:
But tulip-leaves and lemon-peel,
Help only to adorn the meal;

And painted flags, ſuperb and neat,
Proclaim you welcome to the treat.
The man of ſenſe his meat devours,
But only ſmells the peel and flow'rs;
And he muſt be an idle dreamer
Who leaves the pie and gnaws the ſtreamer.

That Cupid goes with bow and arrows,
And Venus keeps her coach and ſparrows,
Is all but emblem, to acquaint one
The ſon is ſharp, the mother wanton.
Such images have ſometimes ſhown
A myſtic ſenſe, but oft'ner none;
For who conceives what bards deviſe,
That heav'n is plac'd in Celia's eyes?
Or where's the ſenſe, direct and moral,
That teeth are pearl, or lips are coral?

Your Horace owns he various writ,
As wild or ſober maggots bit;
And where too much the poet ranted,
The ſage philoſopher recanted.
His grave Epiſtles may diſprove
The wanton Odes he made to love.

Lucretius keeps a mighty pother
With Cupid and his fancy'd mother;
Calls her great Queen of earth and air,
Declares that winds and ſeas obey her,
And, while her honour he rehearſes,
Implores her to inſpire his verſes.

Yet, free from this poetic madneſs,
Next page he ſays, in ſober ſadneſs,
That ſhe and all her fellow-gods
Sit idling in their high abodes,
Regardleſs of this world below,
Our health or hanging, weal or woe,
Nor once diſturb their heav'nly ſpirits
With Scapin's cheats or Cæſar's merits.
Nor e'er can Latin poets prove
Where lies the real ſeat of Love.
Jecur they burn, and *cor* they pierce,
As either beſt ſupplies their verſe;
And if folks aſk the reaſon for't,
Say one was long and th'other ſhort.
Thus I preſume the Britiſh Muſe
May take the freedom ſtrangers uſe.
In proſe our property is greater;
Why ſhould it then be leſs in metre?
If Cupid throws a ſingle dart,
We make him wound the lover's heart;
But if he takes his bow and quiver,
Tis ſure he muſt transfix the liver:
For rhyme with reaſon may diſpenſe,
And ſound has right to govern ſenſe.
But let your friends in verſe ſuppoſe,
What ne'er ſhall be allow'd in proſe,
Anatomiſts can make it clear
The liver minds his own affair,

Kindly ſupplies our public uſes,
And parts and ſtrains the vital juices,
Still lays ſome uſeful bile aſide,
To tinge the chyle's inſipid tide,
Elſe we ſhould want both gibe and ſatire,
And all be burſt with pure good-nature:
Now gall is bitter with a witneſs,
And love is all delight and ſweetneſs:
My logic then has loſt its aim,
If ſweet and bitter be the ſame;
And he, methinks, is no great ſcholar
Who can miſtake deſire for choler
The like may of the heart be ſaid;
Courage and terror there are bred.
All thoſe whoſe hearts are looſe and low
Start if they hear but the tattoo:
And mighty phyſical their fear is,
For ſoon as noiſe of combat near is,
Their heart, deſcending to their breeches,
Muſt give their ſtomach cruel twitches:
But heroes who o'ercome or die,
Have their hearts hung extremely high,
The ſtrings of which, in battle's heat,
Againſt their very corſlets beat,
Keep time with their own trumpet's meaſure,
And yield 'em moſt exceſſive pleaſure.
Now if 'tis chiefly in the heart
That courage does itſelf exert,

'Twill be prodigious hard to prove
That this is eke the throne of Love.
Would Nature make one place the ſeat
Of fond deſire and fell debate?
Muſt people only take delight in
Thoſe hours when they are tir'd with fighting?
And has no man but who has kill'd
A father right to get a child?
Theſe notions, then, I think but idle,
And love ſhall ſtill poſſeſs the middle.
This truth more plainly to diſcover,
Suppoſe your hero were a lover;
Tho' he before had gall and rage,
Which death or conqueſt muſt aſſwage,
He grows diſpirited and low,
He hates the fight and ſhuns the foe.
In ſcornful ſloth Achilles ſlept,
And for his wench, like Tallboy, wept,
Nor would return to war and ſlaughter,
Till they brought back the parſon's daughter.
Antonius fled from Actium's coaſt,
Auguſtus preſſing Aſia loſt:
His ſails by Cupid's hand unfurl'd,
To keep the fair he gave the world.
Edward our Fourth, rever'd and crown'd,
Vig'rous in youth, in arms renown'd,
While England's voice and Warwick's care
Deſign'd him Gallia's beauteous heir,

Chang'd peace and pow'r for rage and wars,
Only to dry one widow's tears.
France's Fourth Henry we may ſee
A ſervant to the fair d'Eſtree;
When quitting Coutras' proſp'rous field,
And Fortune taught at length to yield,
He from his guards and midnight tent,
Diſguis'd o'er hills and vallies went,
To wanton with the ſprightly dame,
And in his pleaſure loſt his fame.
Bold is the critic who dares prove
Theſe heroes were no friends to love;
And bolder he who dares aver
That they were enemies to war:
Yet when their thought ſhould, now or never,
Have rais'd their heart or fir'd their liver,
Fond Alma to thoſe parts was gone
Which Love more juſtly calls his own.
Examples I could cite you more,
But be contented with theſe four;
For when one's proofs are aptly choſen,
Four are as valid as four dozen.
One came from Greece, and one from Rome;
The other two grew nearer home:
For ſome in ancient books delight,
Others prefer what Moderns write;
Now I ſhould be extremely loath
Not to be thought expert in both.

CANTO II.

But ſhall we take the Muſe abroad,
To drop her idly on the road,
And leave our ſubject in the middle,
As Butler did his Bear and Fiddle?
Yet he, conſummate maſter, knew
When to recede and where purſue:
His noble negligences teach
What others' toils deſpair to reach.
He, perfect dancer, climbs the rope,
And balances your fear and hope:
If after ſome diſtinguiſh'd leap
He drops his pole and ſeems to ſlip,
Straight gath'ring all his active ſtrength,
He riſes higher half his length:
With wonder you approve his ſleight,
And owe your pleaſure to your fright:
But like poor Andrew I advance,
Falſe mimic of my maſter's dance;
Around the cord a while I ſprawl,
And thence, tho' low, in earneſt fall.
My preface tells you I digreſs'd:
He's half abſolv'd who has confeſs'd.
I like, quoth Dick, your ſimile,
And, in return, take two from me.
As maſters in the *clare-obſcure*
With various light your eyes allure,

A flaming yellow here they ſpread,
Draw off in blue, or charge in red;
Yet from theſe colours oddly mix'd,
Your ſight upon the whole is fix'd:
Or as, again, your courtly dames
(Whoſe clothes returning birth-day claims)
By arts improve the ſtuffs they vary,
And things are beſt as moſt contrary;
The gown with ſtiff embroid'ry ſhining,
Looks charming with a ſlighter lining;
The out-, if Indian figure ſtain,
The in-ſide muſt be rich and plain:
So you, great authors, have thought fit
To make digreſſion temper wit:
When arguments too fiercely glare,
You calm 'em with a milder air:
To break their points, you turn their force,
And furbelow the plain diſcourſe.

Richard, quoth Matt, theſe words of thine
Speak ſomething ſly and ſomething fine;
But I ſhall e'en reſume my theme,
However thou may'ſt praiſe or blame.

As people marry now and ſettle,
Fierce Love abates his uſual mettle;
Worldly deſires and houſehold cares
Diſturb the godhead's ſoft affairs:
So now, as health or temper changes,
In larger compaſs Alma ranges;

This day below, the next above,
As light or ſolid whimſies move.
So merchant has his houſe in Town,
And country-ſeat near Banſted Down;
From one he dates his foreign letters,
Sends out his goods and duns his debtors;
In th' other, at his hours of leiſure,
He ſmokes his pipe and takes his pleaſure.
And now your matrimonial Cupid,
Laſh'd on by Time, grows tir'd and ſtupid:
For ſtory and experience tell us
That man grows cold and woman jealous.
Both would their little ends ſecure;
He ſighs for freedom, ſhe for pow'r:
His wiſhes tend abroad to roam,
And her's to domineer at home.
Thus paſſion flags by ſlow degrees,
And ruffled more, delighted leſs,
The buſy mind does ſeldom go
To thoſe once charming ſeats below;
But, in the breaſt incamp'd, prepares
For well-bred feints and future wars.
The man ſuſpects his lady's crying
(When he laſt autumn lay a-dying)
Was but to gain him to appoint her
By codicil a larger jointure:
The woman finds it all a trick
That he could ſwoon when ſhe was ſick,

And knows that in that grief he reckon'd
On black-ey'd Sufan for his ſecond.
Thus having ſtrove ſome tedious years
With feign'd deſires and real fears,
And tir'd with anſwers and replies
Of John affirms, and Martha lies,
Leaving this endleſs altercation,
The mind affects a higher ſtation.
Poltis, that gen'rous king of Thrace,
I think was in this very caſe.
All Aſia now was by the ears,
And gods beat up for volunteers
To Greece and Troy, while Poltis ſate
In quiet governing his ſtate.
And whence, ſaid the pacific king,
Does all this noiſe and diſcord ſpring?
Why, Paris took Attrides' wife—
With eaſe I could compoſe this ſtrife:
The injur'd hero ſhould not loſe,
Nor the young lover want, a ſpouſe.
But Helen chang'd her firſt condition,
Without her huſband's juſt permiſſion.
What from the dame can Paris hope?
She may as well from him elope.
Again, How can her old goodman
With honour take her back again?
From hence I logically gather
The woman cannot live with either.

Now I have two right honeſt wives,
For whoſe poſſeſſion no man ſtrives:
One to Attrides I will ſend,
And th' other to my Trojan friend.
Each prince ſhall thus with honour have
What both ſo warmly ſeem to crave;
The wrath of gods and man ſhall ceaſe,
And Poltis live and die in peace.
Dick, if this ſtory pleaſeth thee,
Pray thank Dan Pope, who told it me.
Howe'er ſwift Alma's flight may vary,
(Take this by way of corollary)
Some limbs ſhe finds the very ſame
In place, and dignity, and name;
Theſe dwell at ſuch convenient diſtance,
That each may give his friend aſſiſtance.
Thus he who runs or dances, begs
The equal vigour of two legs;
So much to both does Alma truſt,
She ne'er regards which goes the firſt.
Teague could make neither of them ſtay,
When with himſelf he ran away.
The man who ſtruggles in the fight,
Fatigues left arm as well as right;
For whilſt one hand exalts the blow,
And on the earth extends the foe,
Th' other would take it wondrous ill
If in your pocket he lay ſtill.

And when you ſhoot, and ſhut one eye,
You cannot think he would deny
To lend the other friendly aid,
Or wink as coward, and afraid.
No, Sir; whilſt he withdraws his flame,
His comrade takes the ſurer aim.
One moment if his beams recede,
As ſoon as e'er the bird is dead,
Op'ning again, he lays his claim
To half the profit, half the fame,
And helps to pocket up the game.
'Tis thus one tradeſman ſlips away,
To give his part'ner fairer play.

Some limbs again, in bulk or ſtature
Unlike, and not a-kin by Nature,
In concert act, like modern friends,
Becauſe one ſerves th' other's ends.
The arm thus waits upon the heart,
So quick to take the bully's part,
That one, tho' warm, decides more ſlow
Than th' other executes the blow:
A ſtander-by may chance to have it
Ere Hack himſelf perceives he gave it.

The am'rous eyes thus always go
A-ſtrolling for their friends below;
For long before the 'ſquire and dame
Have *tête à tête* reliev'd their flame,
Ere viſits yet are brought about,
The eye by ſympathy looks out,

Knows Florimel, and longs to meet her,
And if he ſees is ſure to greet her,
Tho' at ſaſh-window, on the ſtairs,
At court, nay, (authors ſay) at pray'rs.—
The fun'ral of ſome valiant knight
May give this thing its proper light.
View his two gauntlets; theſe declare
That both his hands were us'd to war;
And from his two gilt ſpurs 'tis learn'd
His feet were equally concern'd:
But have you not with thought beheld
The ſword hang dangling o'er the ſhield?
Which ſhows the breaſt that plate was us'd to,
Had an ally right arm to truſt to;
And by the peep-holes in his creſt,
Is it not virtually confeſt
That there his eye took diſtant aim,
And glanc'd reſpect to that bright dame
In whoſe delight his hope was center'd,
And for whoſe glove his life he ventur'd?
Objections to my general Syſtem
May riſe, perhaps, and I have miſt them;
But I can call to my aſſiſtance
Proximity (mark that!) and diſtance;
Can prove that all things, on occaſion,
Love union, and deſire adheſion;
That Alma merely is a ſcale,
And motives, like the weights, prevail:

If neither ſide turn down or up,
With loſs or gain, with fear or hope,
The balance always would hang ev'n,
Like Mah'met's tomb, 'twixt earth and heav'n.
This, Richard, is a curious caſe:
Suppoſe your eyes ſent equal rays
Upon two diſtant pots of ale,
Not knowing which was mild or ſtale;
In this ſad ſtate your doubtful choice
Would never have the caſting voice;
Which beſt or worſt you could not think,
And die you muſt for want of drink,
Unleſs ſome chance inclines your ſight,
Setting one pot in fairer light;
Then you prefer or A or B,
As lines and angles beſt agree;
Your ſenſe reſolv'd impels your will;
She guides your hand—So drink your fill.
Have you not ſeen a baker's maid
Between two equal panniers ſway'd?
Her tallies uſeleſs lie and idle,
If plac'd exactly in the middle;
But forc'd from this unactive ſtate,
By virtue of ſome caſual weight,
On either ſide you hear 'em clatter,
And judge of right and left hand matter.
Now, Richard, this coercive force,
Without your choice muſt take its courſe.

Great kings to wars are pointed forth,
Like loaded needles to the North,
And thou and I, by pow'r unſeen,
Are barely paſſive and ſuck'd in
To Henault's vaults or Celia's chamber,
As ſtraw and paper are by amber.
If we ſit down to play or ſet
(Suppoſe at Ombre or Baſſet)
Let people call us cheats or fools,
Our cards and we are equal tools.
We ſure in vain the cards condemn;
Ourſelves both cut and ſhuffled them:
In vain on Fortune's aid rely;
She only is a ſtander-by.
Poor men! poor papers! we and they
Do ſome impulſive force obey,
And are but play'd with—do not play.
But ſpace and matter we ſhould blame;
They palm'd the trick that loſt the game.
Thus to ſave further contradiction
Againſt what you may think but fiction,
I for attraction, Dick, declare,
Deny it thoſe bold men that dare.
As well your motion as your thought
Is all by hidden impulſe wrought;
Ev'n ſaying that you think or walk,
How like a country 'ſquire you talk?
Mark then;—Where fancy or deſire
Collects the beams of vital fire,

Into that limb fair Alma ſlides,
And there, *pro tempore*, reſides;
She dwells in Nicholini's tongue,
When Pyrrhus chants the heav'nly ſong;
When Pedro does the lute command,
She guides the cunning artiſt's hand;
Thro' Macer's gullet ſhe runs down,
When the vile glutton dines alone;
And, void of modeſty and thought,
She follows Bibo's endleſs draught.
Thro' the ſoft ſex again ſhe ranges,
As youth, caprice, or faſhion, changes:
Fair Alma, careleſs and ſerene,
In Fanny's ſprightly eyes is ſeen,
While they diffuſe their infant beams,
Themſelves not conſcious of their flames.
Again, fair Alma ſits conſeſt
On Florimel's experter breaſt,
When ſhe the riſing ſigh conſtrains,
And by concealing ſpeaks her pains.
In Cynthia's neck fair Alma glows,
When the vain thing her jewels ſhows;
When Jenny's ſtays are newly lac'd,
Fair Alma plays about her waiſt;
And when the ſwelling hoop ſuſtains
The rich brocade, fair Alma deigns
Into that lower ſpace to enter,
Of the large round herſelf the centre.

Again; that ſingle limb or feature
(Such is the cogent force of Nature)
Which moſt did Alma's paſſion move,
In the firſt object of her love,
For ever will be found confeſt,
And printed on the am'rous breaſt.
O Abelard! ill-fated youth,
Thy tale will juſtify this truth;
But well I weet thy cruel wrong
Adorns a nobler poet's ſong:
Dan Pope, for thy misfortune griev'd,
With kind concern and ſkill has weav'd
A ſilken web, and ne'er ſhall fade
Its colours gently; as he laid
The mantle o'er thy ſad diſtreſs,
And Venus ſhall the texture bleſs.
He o'er the weeping nun has drawn
Such artful folds of ſacred lawn,
That Love, with equal grief and pride,
Shall ſee the crime he ſtrives to hide,
And ſoftly drawing back the veil,
The god ſhall to his vot'ries tell
Each conſcious tear, each bluſhing grace,
That deck'd dear Eloïſa's face.
Happy the poet, bleſt the lays,
Which Buckingham has deign'd to praiſe.
Next, Dick, as youth and habit ſways,
A hundred gambols Alma plays.

If, whilſt a boy, Jack run from ſchool,
Fond of his hunting-horn and pole,
Tho' gout and age his ſpeed detain,
Old John halloos his hounds again:
By his fireſide he ſtarts the hare,
And turns her in his wicker-chair.
His feet, however lame, you find,
Have got the better of his mind.

If, while the Mind was in her leg,
The dance affected nimble Peg,
Old Madge bewitch'd, at ſixty-one
Calls for Green Sleeves and Jumping Joan.
In public maſk or private ball,
From Lincoln's-Inn to Goldſmith's-Hall,
All Chriſtmas long away ſhe trudges,
Trips it with 'prentices and judges;
In vain her children urge her ſtay,
And age or palſy bar the way:
But if thoſe images prevail,
Which whilom did affect the tail,
She ſtill reviews the ancient ſcene,
Forgets the forty years between;
Awkwardly gay, and oddly merry,
Her ſcarf pale pink, her headknot cherry,
O'erheated with ideal rage,
She cheats her ſon to wed her page.

If Alma, whilſt the man was young,
Slipp'd up too ſoon into his tongue,

Pleas'd with his own fantaſtic ſkill,
He lets that weapon ne'er lie ſtill:
On any point if you diſpute,
Depend upon it he'll confute:
Change ſides, and you increaſe your pain;
For he'll confute you back again:
For one may ſpeak with Tully's tongue,
Yet all the while be in the wrong;
And 'tis remarkable that they
Talk moſt who have the leaſt to ſay.
Your dainty ſpeakers have the curſe
To plead bad cauſes down to worſe;
As dames who native beauty want,
Still uglier look the more they paint.
Again; if in the female ſex
Alma ſhould on this member fix,
(A cruel and a deſp'rate caſe,
From which Heav'n ſhield my lovely laſs!)
For evermore all care is vain
That would bring Alma down again.
As in habitual gout or ſtone,
The only thing that can be done
Is to correct your drink and diet,
And keep the inward foe in quiet;
So if for any ſins of ours,
Or our forefathers, higher pow'rs,
Severe tho' juſt, afflict our life
With that prime ill a talking wife,

Till death ſhall bring the kind relief,
We muſt be patient or be deaf.
You know a certain lady, Dick,
Who ſaw me when I laſt was ſick;
She kindly talk'd, at leaſt three hours,
Of plaſtic forms, and mental pow'rs;
Deſcrib'd our pre-exiſting ſtation,
Before this vile terrene creation;
And, leſt I ſhould be weary'd, Madam,
To cut things ſhort, came down to Adam;
From whence, as faſt as ſhe was able,
She drowns the world, and builds up Babel:
Thro' Syria, Perſia, Greece, ſhe goes,
And takes the Romans in the cloſe.
But we'll deſcant on gen'ral Nature;
This is a Syſtem, not a ſatire.
Turn we this globe, and let us ſee
How diff'rent nations diſagree
In what we wear, or eat, and drink;
Nay, Dick, perhaps in what we think.
In water as you ſmell and taſte
The ſoils thro' which it roſe and paſt,
In Alma's manners you may read
The place where ſhe was born and bred.
One people from their ſwaddling-bands
Releas'd their infants' feet and hands:
Here Alma to theſe limbs was brought,
And Sparta's offspring kick'd and fought.

Another taught their babes to talk,
Ere they could yet in go-carts walk:
There Alma ſettled in the tongue,
And orators from Athens ſprung.

Obſerve but in theſe neighb'ring lands
The diff'rent uſe of mouths and hands:
As men repos'd their various hopes,
In battles theſe, and thoſe in tropes.

In Britain's iſles, as Heylin notes,
The ladies trip in petticoats,
Which for the honour of their nation,
They quit but on ſome great occaſion.
Men there in breeches clad you view;
They claim that garment as their due.
In Turkey the reverſe appears;
Long coats the haughty huſband wears,
And greets his wife with angry ſpeeches,
If ſhe be ſeen without her breeches.

In our fantaſtic climes the fair
With cleanly powder dry their hair,
And round their lovely breaſt and head
Freſh flow'rs their mingled odours ſhed:
Your nicer Hottentots think meet
With guts and tripe to deck their feet;
With downcaſt looks on Totta's legs
The ogling youth moſt humbly begs
She would not from his hopes remove
At once his breakfaſt and his love;

And if the ſkittiſh nymph ſhould fly,
He in a double ſenſe muſt die.
We ſimple toaſters take delight
To ſee our women's teeth look white,
And every ſaucy ill-bred fellow
Sneers at a mouth profoundly yellow.
In China none hold women ſweet
Except their ſnaggs are black as jet:
King Chihu put nine queens to death,
Convict on ſtatute, Iv'ry teeth.
At Tonquin if a prince ſhould die,
(As Jeſuits write, who never lie)
The wife, and counſellor, and prieſt,
Who ſerv'd him moſt and lov'd him beſt,
Prepare and light his fun'ral fire,
And cheerful on the pile expire.
In Europe 'twould be hard to find
In each degree one half ſo kind.
Now turn we to the fartheſt Eaſt,
And there obſerve the gentry dreſt.
Prince Giolo and his royal ſiſters,
Scarr'd with ten thouſand comely bliſters,
The marks remaining on the ſkin,
To tell the quality within:
Diſtinguiſh'd ſlaſhes deck the great,
As each excels in birth or ſtate;
His oylet-holes are more and ampler;
The king's own body was a ſampler.

Happy the climate where the beau
Wears the ſame ſuit for uſe and ſhow;
And at a ſmall expenſe your wife,
If once well pink'd, is cloth'd for life.
Weſtward again, the Indian fair
Is nicely ſmear'd with fat of bear:
Before you ſee you ſmell your toaſt,
And ſweeteſt ſhe who ſtinks the moſt.
The fineſt ſparks and cleaneſt beaux
Drip from the ſhoulders to the toes.
How ſleek their ſkins! their joints how eaſy!
There ſlovens only are not greaſy.
I mention'd diff'rent ways of breeding;
Begin we in our children's reading.
To Maſter John the Engliſh maid
A horn-book gives of gingerbread,
And that the child may learn the better,
As he can name he eats the letter;
Proceeding thus with vaſt delight,
He ſpells and gnaws from left to right.
But ſhew a Hebrew's hopeful ſon
Where we ſuppoſe the book begun,
The child would thank you for your kindneſs,
And read quite backward from our *finis*:
Devour he learning ne'er ſo faſt,
Great A would be reſerv'd the laſt.
An equal inſtance of this matter
Is in the manners of a daughter.

In Europe if a harmleſs maid,
By Nature and by Love betray'd,
Should ere a wife become a nurſe,
Her friends would look on her the worſe.
In China, Dampier's Travels tell ye,
(Look in his index for Pagelli)
Soon as the Britiſh ſhips unmoore,
And jolly longboat rows to ſhore,
Down come the nobles of the land,
Each brings his daughter in his hand,
Beſeeching the imperious tar
To make her but one hour his care:
The tender mother ſtands affrighted,
Leſt her dear daughter ſhould be ſlighted,
And poor Miſs Yaya dreads the ſhame
Of going back the maid ſhe came.
Obſerve how cuſtom, Dick, compels
The lady that in Europe dwells:
After her tea ſhe ſlips away,
And what to do one need not ſay.
Now ſee how great Pomonque's queen
Behav'd herſelf amongſt the men;
Pleas'd with her punch, the gallant ſoul
Firſt drank, then water'd in the bowl,
And ſprinkled in the captain's face
The marks of her peculiar grace——
To cloſe this point we need not roam
For inſtances ſo far from home.

What parts gay France from ſober Spain?
A little riſing rocky chain.
Of men born ſouth or north o' the hill,
Thoſe ſeldom move, theſe ne'er ſtand ſtill.
Dick, you love maps, and may perceive
Rome not far diſtant from Geneve.
If the good Pope remains at home,
He's the firſt prince in Chriſtendom.
Chuſe then, good Pope, at home to ſtay,
Nor weſtward, curious, take thy way;
Thy way, unhappy, ſhouldſt thou take
From Tiber's bank to Leman-lake,
Thou art an aged prieſt no more,
But a young flaring painted whore:
Thy ſex is loſt; thy town is gone;
No longer Rome, but Babylon.
That ſome few leagues ſhould make this change,
To men unlearn'd ſeems mighty ſtrange.
  But need we, Friend, inſiſt on this?
Since in the very Cantons Swiſs
All your philoſophers agree,
And prove it plain, that one may be
A heretic or true believer,
On this or th' other ſide a river.
  Here with an artful ſmile, quoth Dick,
Your proofs come mighty full and thick—
  The bard, on this extenſive chapter
Wound up into poetic rapture,

Continu'd: Richard, caſt your eye
By night upon a winter-ſky;
Caſt it by day-light on the ſtrand
Which compaſſes fair Albion's land;
If you can count the ſtars that glow
Above, or ſands that lie below,
Into theſe common-places look
Which from great authors I have took,
And count the proofs I have collected,
To have my writings well protected:
Theſe I lay by for time of need,
And thou may'ſt at thy leiſure read:
For ſtanding every critic's rage,
I ſafely will to future age
My Syſtem, as a gift, bequeath,
Victorious over ſpight and death.

CANTO III.

Richard, who now was half aſleep,
Rous'd, nor would longer ſilence keep;
And ſenſe like this, in vocal breath,
Broke from his twofold hedge of teeth.
Now if this phraſe too harſh be thought,
Pope, tell the world 'tis not my fault.
Old Homer taught us thus to ſpeak;
If 'tis not ſenſe, at leaſt 'tis Greek.

As folks, quoth Richard, prone to leaſing,
Say things at firſt becauſe they 're pleaſing,

'Then prove what they have once asserted,
Nor care to have their lie deserted,
'Till their own dreams at length deceive 'em,
And oft' repeating they believe 'em;
Or as, again, those am'rous blades
Who trifle with their mothers' maids,
'Tho' at the first their wild desire
Was but to quench a present fire,
Yet if the object of their love
Chance by Lucina's aid to prove,
They seldom let the bantling roar
In basket at a neighbour's door,
But by the flatt'ring glass of Nature
Viewing themselves in Cakebread's feature,
With serious thought and care support
What only was begun in sport:
Just so with you, my Friend, it fares,
Who deal in philosophic wares;
Atoms you cut, and forms you measure,
To gratify your private pleasure,
'Till airy seeds of casual wit
Do some fantastic birth beget;
And pleas'd to find your system mended
Beyond what you at first intended,
The happy whimsey you pursue,
'Till you at length believe it true:
Caught by your own delusive art,
You fancy first, and then assert.

Quoth Matthew; Friend, as far as I
Thro' Art or Nature caſt my eye,
This axiom clearly I diſcern,
That one muſt teach and th' other learn.
No fool Pythagoras was thought;
Whilſt he his weighty doctrines taught,
He made his liſt'ning ſcholars ſtand,
Their mouth ſtill cover'd with their hand;
Elſe, may be, ſome odd-thinking youth,
Leſs friend to doctrine than to truth,
Might have refus'd to let his ears
Attend the muſic of the ſpheres,
Deny'd all tranſmigrating ſcenes,
And introduc'd the uſe of beans.
From great Lucretius take his void,
And all the world is quite deſtroy'd.
Deny Deſcart his ſubtile matter,
You leave him neither fire nor water.
How oddly would Sir Iſaac look,
If you, in anſwer to his book,
Say in the front of your diſcourſe,
That things have no elaſtic force?
How could our chymic friends go on
To find the philoſophic ſtone,
If you more pow'rful reaſons bring
To prove that there is no ſuch thing?
Your chiefs in ſciences and arts
Have great contempt of Alma's parts:

They find ſhe giddy is or dull,
She doubts if things are void or full;
And who ſhould be preſum'd to tell
What ſhe herſelf ſhould ſee or feel?
She doubts if two and two make four,
Tho' ſhe has told them ten times o'er.
It can't—it may be—and it muſt;
To which of theſe muſt Alma truſt?
Nay, further yet they make her go,
In doubting if ſhe doubts or no.
Can ſyllogiſm ſet things right?
No; majors ſoon with minors fight;
Or, both in friendly conſort join'd,
The conſequence limps falſe behind.
So to ſome cunning man ſhe goes,
And aſks of him how much ſhe knows;
With patience grave he hears her ſpeak,
And from his ſhort notes gives her back
What from her tale he comprehended;
Thus the diſpute is wiſely ended.

From the account the loſer brings,
The conj'ror knows who ſtole the things.

'Squire (interrupted Dick) ſince when
Were you amongſt theſe cunning men?

Dear Dick, quoth Matt, let not thy force
Of eloquence ſpoil my diſcourſe:
I tell thee this is Alma's caſe,
Still aſking what ſome wiſe man ſays,

Who does his mind in words reveal,
Which all muſt grant, tho' few can ſpell.
You tell your doctor that ye 're ill,
And what does he but write a bill?
Of which you need not read one letter;
The worſe the ſcrawl the doſe the better:
For if you knew but what you take,
Tho' you recover he muſt break.

Ideas, forms, and intellects,
Have furniſh'd out three diff'rent ſects.
Subſtance or accident divides
All Europe into adverſe ſides.

Now as, engag'd in arms or laws,
You muſt have friends to back your cauſe,
In philoſophic matters ſo
Your judgment muſt with others go:
For as in ſenates ſo in ſchools,
Majority of voices rules.

Poor Alma, like a lonely deer,
O'er hills and dales does doubtful err:
With panting haſte and quick ſurpriſe,
From ev'ry leaf that ſtirs ſhe flies,
Till mingled with the neighb'ring herd,
She ſlights what erſt ſhe ſingly fear'd,
And now, exempt from doubt and dread,
She dares purſue if they dare lead;
As their example ſtill prevails,
She tempts the ſtream or leaps the pales.

He, then, quoth Dick, who by your rule,
Thinks for himſelf becomes a fool;
As party-man who leaves the reſt,
Is call'd but whimſical at beſt.
Now, by your favour, Maſter Matt,
Like Ralpho, here I ſmell a rat.
I muſt be liſted in your ſect,
Who, tho' they teach not, can protect.
Right, Richard, Matt, in triumph, cry'd,
So put off all miſtruſt and pride;
And while my principles I beg,
Pray anſwer only with your leg.
Believe what friendly I adviſe;
Be firſt ſecure, and then be wiſe.
The man within the coach that ſits,
And to another's ſkill ſubmits,
Is ſafer much (whate'er arrives)
And warmer too, than he that drives.
So, Dick, adept, tuck back thy hair,
And I will pour into thy ear
Remarks which none did e'er diſcloſe
In ſmooth-pac'd verſe or hobbling proſe.
Attend, dear Dick, but don't reply,
And thou may'ſt prove as wiſe as I.
When Alma now in diff'rent ages
Has finiſh'd her aſcending ſtages,
Into the head at length ſhe gets,
And there in public grandeur ſits,
To judge of things, and cenſure wits.

Here, Richard, how could I explain
The various lab'rinths of the brain?
Surpriſe my readers, whilſt I tell 'em
Of *cerebrum* and *cerebellum?*
How could I play the commentator
On *dura* and on *pia mater?*
Where hot and cold, and dry and wet,
Strive each the other's place to get,
And with inceſſant toil and ſtrife,
Would keep poſſeſſion during life?
I could demonſtrate every pore,
Where Mem'ry lays up all her ſtore,
And to an inch compute the ſtation
'Twixt judgment and imagination.
O Friend! I could diſplay much learning,
At leaſt to men of ſmall diſcerning.
The brain contains ten thouſand cells,
In each ſome active fancy dwells,
Which always is at work, and framing
The ſeveral follies I was naming.
As in a hive's vimineous dome,
Ten thouſand bees enjoy their home,
Each does her ſtudious action vary,
To go and come, to fetch and carry;
Each ſtill renews her little labour,
Nor joſtles her aſſiduous neighbour;
Each—Whilſt this theſis I maintain,
I fancy, Dick, I know thy brain.

O, with the mighty theme affected,
Could I but ſee thy head diſſected!
My head, quoth Dick, to ſerve your whim?
Spare that, and take ſome other limb.
Sir, in your nice affairs of Syſtem,
Wiſe men propoſe, but fools aſſiſt 'em.
Says Matthew; Richard, keep thy head,
And hold thy peace, and I'll proceed.
Proceed? quoth Dick: Sir, I aver
You have already gone too far.
When people once are in the wrong,
Each line they add is much too long.
Who faſteſt walks, but walks aſtray,
Is only furtheſt from his way.
Bleſs your conceits! muſt I believe,
Howe'er abſurd, what you conceive,
And for your friendſhip live and die
A Papiſt in philoſophy?
I ſay whatever you maintain
Of Alma in the heart or brain,
The plaineſt man alive may tell ye
Her ſeat of empire is the belly;
From hence ſhe ſends out thoſe ſupplies
Which make us either ſtout or wiſe:
The ſtrength of ev'ry other member
Is founded on your belly-timber:
The qualms or raptures of your blood
Riſe in proportion to your food;

And if you would improve your thought,
You muſt be fed as well as taught:
Your ſtomach makes your fabric roll,
Juſt as the bias rules the bowl.
That great Achilles might employ
The ſtrength deſign'd to ruin Troy,
He din'd on lion's marrow, ſpread
On toaſts of ammunition-bread;
But by his mother ſent away
Amongſt the Thracian girls to play,
Effeminate he ſate, and quiet;
Strange product of a cheeſecake diet!
Now give my argument fair play,
And take the thing the other way.
The youngſter who at nine and three
Drinks with his ſiſters milk and tea,
From breakfaſt reads, till twelve o'clock,
Burnet and Heylin, Hobbes and Locke;
He pays due viſits after noon,
To Couſin Alice and Uncle John;
At ten, from coffeehouſe or play
Returning, finiſhes the day:
But give him Port and potent ſack,
From milkſop he ſtarts up Mohack;
Holds that the happy know no hours;
So thro' the ſtreet at midnight ſcow'rs;
Breaks watchmen's heads and chairmen's glaſſes,
And thence proceeds to nicking ſaſhes,

Till by ſome tougher hand o'ercome,
And firſt knock'd down, and then led home,
He damns the footman, ſtrikes the maid,
And decently reels up to bed.
  Obſerve the various operations
Of food and drink in ſeveral nations.
Was ever Tartar fierce or cruel
Upon the ſtrength of watergruel?
But who ſhall ſtand his rage and force,
If firſt he rides, then eats his horſe?
Sallads, and eggs, and lighter fare,
Tune the Italian ſpark's guitar:
And, if I take Dan Congreve right,
Pudding and beef make Britons fight.
Tokay and coffee cauſe this work
Between the German and the Turk;
And both, as they proviſions want,
Chicane, avoid, retire, and faint.
  Hunger and thirſt, or guns and ſwords,
Give the ſame death in diff'rent words.
To puſh this argument no further,
To ſtarve a man in law is murther.
  As in a watch's fine machine
Tho' many artful ſprings are ſeen,
The added movements, which declare
How full the moon, how old the year,
Derive their ſecondary pow'r
From that which ſimply points the hour:

For tho' thoſe gimcracks were away,
(Quare would not ſwear, but Quare would ſay)
However more reduc'd and plain,
The watch would ſtill a watch remain;
But if the horal orbit ceaſes,
The whole ſtands ſtill or breaks to pieces;
Is now no longer what it was,
And you may e'en go ſell the caſe.
So if, unprejudic'd, you ſcan
The goings of this clockwork Man,
You find a hundred movements made
By fine devices in his head;
But 'tis the ſtomach's ſolid ſtroke
That tells his being what's o'clock.
If you take off his rhet'ric trigger,
He talks no more in mood and figure;
Or, clog his mathematic wheel,
His buildings fall, his ſhip ſtands ſtill:
Or, laſtly, break his politic weight,
His voice no longer rules the ſtate:
Yet if theſe finer whims were gone,
Your clock, tho' plain, would ſtill go on;
But ſpoil the engine of digeſtion,
And you entirely change the queſtion.
Alma's affairs no pow'r can mend;
The jeſt, alas! is at an end;
Soon ceaſes all this worldly buſtle,
And you conſign the corpſe to Ruſſel.

Now make your Alma come or go,
From leg to hand, from top to toe,
Your Syſtem, without my addition,
Is in a very ſad condition.
So Harlequin extoll'd his horſe
Fit for the war, or road, or courſe:
His mouth was ſoft, his eye was good,
His foot was ſure as ever trod;
One fault he had, a fault indeed;
And what was that? the horſe was dead.
Dick, from theſe inſtances and fetches
Thou mak'ſt of horſes, clocks, and watches,
Quoth Matt, to me thou ſeem'ſt to mean
That Alma is a mere machine:
That telling others what's o'clock,
She knows not what herſelf has ſtruck,
But leaves to ſtanders-by the trial
Of what is mark'd upon her dial.
Here hold; a blow, good Friend, quoth Dick,
And rais'd his voice exceeding quick.
Fight fair, Sir: what I never meant
Don't you infer. In argument
Similies are like ſongs in love:
They much deſcribe, they nothing prove.
Matt, who was here a little gravell'd,
Toſs'd up his noſe, and would have cavill'd;
But calling Hermes to his aid,
Half pleas'd, half angry, thus he ſaid:

Where mind ('tis for the author's fame)
That Matthew call'd and Hermes came.
In danger heroes, and in doubt,
Poets find gods to help 'em out.
Friend Richard, I begin to ſee
That you and I ſhall ſcarce agree.
Obſerve how oddly you behave;
The more I grant the more you crave:
But, Comrade, as I ſaid juſt now,
I ſhould affirm, and you allow.
We Syſtem-makers can ſuſtain
The theſis which you grant was plain,
And with remarks and comments teaze ye,
In caſe the thing before was eaſy:
But in a point obſcure and dark,
We fight as Leibnitz did with Clarke;
And when no reaſon we can ſhow
Why matters this or that way go,
The ſhorteſt way the thing we try,
And what we know not we deny;
True to our own o'erbearing pride,
And falſe to all the world beſide.
That old philoſopher grew croſs,
Who could not tell what motion was:
Becauſe he walk'd againſt his will,
He fac'd men down that he ſtood ſtill.
And he who reading on the heart
(When all his *quodlibets* of art

Could not expound its pulſe and heat)
Swore he had never felt it beat.
Chryſippus, foil'd by Epicurus,
Makes bold (Jove bleſs him!) to aſſure us
That all things which our mind can view
May be at once both falſe and true.
And Malbranche has an odd conceit
As ever enter'd Frenchman's pate:
Says he, So little can our mind
Of matter or of ſpirit find,
That we by gueſs, at leaſt, may gather
Something which may be both or neither.
Faith, Dick, I muſt confeſs 'tis true
(But this is only *entre nous*)
That many knotty points there are
Which all diſcuſs but few can clear;
As Nature ſlily had thought fit,
For ſome by-ends to croſs-bite wit:
Circles to ſquare, and cubes to double,
Would give a man exceſſive trouble:
The longitude uncertain roams,
In ſpite of Wh——n and his bombs.
What Syſtem, Dick, has right averr'd
The cauſe why woman has no beard?
Or why, as years our frame attack,
Our hair grows white, our teeth grow black?
In points like theſe we muſt agree
Our barber knows as much as we:

Yet ſtill unable to explain,
We muſt perſiſt the beſt we can;
With care our Syſtems ſtill renew,
And prove things likely, tho' not true.
I could, thou ſee'ſt, in quaint diſpute,
By dint of logic, ſtrike thee mute;
With learned ſkill now puſh, now parry,
From Darii to Bocardo vary,
And never yield, or, what is worſt,
Never conclude the point diſcours'd:
Yet that you *hic & nunc* may know
How much you to my candour owe,
I'll from the diſputant deſcend,
To ſhow thee I aſſume the friend:
I'll take thy notion for my own—
(So moſt philoſophers have done)
It makes my Syſtem more complete:
Dick, can it have a nobler fate?
Take what thou wilt, ſaid Dick, dear Friend,
But bring thy matters to an end.
I find, quoth Matt, reproof is vain;
Who firſt offend will firſt complain.
Thou wiſheſt I ſhould make to ſhore,
Yet ſtill putt'ſt in thy thwarting oar.
What I have told thee fifty times
In proſe, receive for once in rhymes.
A huge fat man in country-fair,
Or city-church, (no matter where)

Labour'd and push'd amidst the crowd,
Still bawling out extremely loud,
Lord save us! why do people press!
Another, marking his distress,
Friendly reply'd; Plump gentleman,
Get out as fast as e'er you can;
Or cease to push or to exclaim;
You make the very crowd you blame.
Says Dick, Your moral does not need
The least return, so e'en proceed:
Your tale, howe'er apply'd, was short:
So far, at least, I thank you for't.
Matt took his thanks, and in a tone
More magisterial thus went on.
Now Alma settles in the head,
As has before been sung or said:
And here begins this farce of life;
Enter Revenge, Ambition, Strife;
Behold on both sides men advance,
To form in earnest Bays's dance.
L'Avare not using half his store,
Still grumbles that he has no more;
Strikes not the present tun, for fear
The vintage should be bad next year,
And eats to-day with inward sorrow,
And dread of fancy'd want to-morrow.
Abroad if the surtout you wear
Repels the rigour of the air,

Would you be warmer if at home
You had the fabric and the loom?
And if two boots keep out the weather,
What need you have two hides of leather?
Could Pedro, think you, make no trial
Of a ſonata on his viol,
Unleſs he had the total gut
Whence ev'ry ſtring at firſt was cut?
When Rarus ſhows you his Cartone,
He always tells you, with a groan,
Where two of that ſame hand were torn,
Long before you or he were born.
Poor Vento's mind ſo much is croſt,
For part of his Petronius loſt,
That he can never take the pains
To underſtand what yet remains.
What toil did honeſt Curio take,
What ſtrict inquiries did he make,
To get one medal, wanting yet,
And perfect all his Roman ſet?
'Tis found: and, O, his happy lot!
'Tis bought, lock'd up, and lies forgot:
Of theſe no more you hear him ſpeak;
He now begins upon the Greek.
Theſe rang'd and ſhow'd, ſhall in their turns
Remain obſcure as in their urns.
My copper lamps at any rate,
For being true antique, I bought,

Yet wiſely melted down my plate,
On modern models to be wrought:
And trifles I alike purſue,
Becauſe they 're old, becauſe they 're new.
Dick, I have ſeen you with delight
For Georgy make a paper kite,
And ſimple odes, too many, ſhow ye
My ſervile complaiſance to Cloe.
Parents and lovers are decreed
By Nature fools—That's brave indeed!
Quoth Dick; ſuch truths are worth receiving:
Yet ſtill Dick look'd as not believing.
Now, Alma, to divines and proſe
I leave thy frauds, and crimes, and woes,
Nor think to-night of thy ill-nature,
But of thy follies, idle creature,
The turns of thy uncertain wing,
And not the malice of thy ſting.
Thy pride of being great and wiſe
I do but mention to deſpiſe;
I view with anger and diſdain
How little gives thee joy or pain:
A print, a bronze, a flow'r, a root,
A ſhell, a butterfly, can do't:
Ev'n a romance, a tune, a rhyme,
Help thee to paſs the tedious time,
Which elſe would on thy hand remain;
Tho' flown, it ne'er looks back again:

And cards are dealt, and chefs-boards brought,
To eaſe the pain of coward thought:
Happy reſult of human wit!
That Alma may herſelf forget.
Dick, thus we act, and thus we are,
Or toſs'd by hope or ſunk by care.
With endleſs pain this man purſues
What, if he gain'd, he could not uſe;
And th' other fondly hopes to ſee
What never was nor e'er ſhall be.
We err by uſe, go wrong by rules,
In geſture grave, in action fools:
We join hypocriſy to pride,
Doubling the faults we ſtrive to hide.
Or grant that with extreme ſurpriſe
We find ourſelves at ſixty wiſe,
And twenty pretty things are known,
Of which we can't accompliſh one,
Whilſt, as my Syſtem ſays, the Mind
Is to theſe upper rooms confin'd;
Should I, my Friend, at large repeat
Her borrow'd ſenſe, her fond conceit,
The bede-roll of her vicious tricks,
My Poem would be too prolix:
For could I my remarks ſuſtain,
Like Socrates or Miles Montaigne,
Who in theſe times would read my books,
But Tom o' Stiles or John o' Nokes?

As Brentford kings, diſcreet and wiſe,
After long thought and grave advice,
Into Lardella's coffin peeping,
Saw nought to cauſe their mirth or weeping;
So Alma, now to joy or grief
Superior, finds her late relief;
Weary'd of being high or great,
And nodding in her chair of ſtate,
Stunn'd and worn out with endleſs chat,
Of Will did this, and Nan ſaid that,
She finds, poor thing, ſome little crack,
Which Nature forc'd by time muſt make,
Thro' which ſhe wings her deſtin'd way;
Upward ſhe ſoars, and down drops clay;
While ſome ſurviving friend ſupplies
Hic jacet, and a hundred lies.

O Richard, till that day appears
Which muſt decide our hopes and fears,
Would Fortune calm her preſent rage,
And give us playthings for our age;
Would Clotho waſh her hands in milk,
And twiſt our thread with gold and ſilk;
Would ſhe in friendſhip, peace, and plenty,
Spin out our years to four times twenty;
And ſhould we both in this condition,
Have conquer'd love, and worſe ambition;
(Elſe thoſe two paſſions, by the way,
May chance to ſhow us ſcurvy play)

Then, Richard, then ſhould we ſit down,
Far from the tumult of this Town;
I fond of my well-choſen ſeat,
My pictures, medals, books complete;
Or, ſhould we mix our friendly talk,
O'erſhaded in that fav'rite walk
Which thy own hand had whilom planted,
Both pleas'd with all we thought we wanted;
Yet then, ev'n then, one croſs reflection
Would ſpoil thy grove and my collection:
Thy ſon and his e'er that may die,
And time ſome unconth heir ſupply,
Who ſhall for nothing elſe be known,
But ſpoiling all that thou haſt done.
Who ſet the twigs ſhall he remember,
That is in haſte to fell the timber?
And what ſhall of thy woods remain,
Except the box that threw the main?

Nay, may not time and death remove
The near relations whom I love?
And my Coz Tom, or his Coz Mary
(Who hold the plough or ſkim the dairy)
My fav'rite books and pictures ſell
To Smart, or Doiley, by the ell?
Kindly throw in a little figure,
And ſet their price upon the bigger?
Thoſe who could never read their grammar,
When my dear volumes touch the hammer,

May think books beſt as richeſt bound:
My copper medals by the pound
May be with learned juſtice weigh'd;
To turn the balance, Otho's head
May be thrown in; and, for the mettle,
The coin may mend a tinker's kettle——
Tir'd with theſe thoughts—Leſs tir'd than I,
Quoth Dick, with your philoſophy—
That people live and die, I knew
An hour ago as well as you;
And if Fate ſpins us longer years,
Or is in haſte to take the ſhears,
I know we muſt both fortunes try,
And bear our evils wet or dry.
Yet let the goddeſs ſmile or frown,
Bread we ſhall eat or white or brown,
And in a cottage or a court
Drink fine Champaigne or muddled Port.
What need of books theſe truths to tell,
Which folks perceive who cannot ſpell?
And muſt we ſpectacles apply
To view what hurts our naked eye?
Sir, if it be your wiſdom's aim
To make me merrier than I am,
I'll be all night at your devotion——
Come on, Friend; broach the pleaſing notion;
But if you would depreſs my thought,
Your Syſtem is not worth a groat——

For Plato's fancies what care I?
I hope you would not have me die,
Like ſimple Cato in the play,
For any thing that he can ſay?
E'en let him of ideas ſpeak
To Heathens in his native Greek:
If to be ſad is to be wiſe,
I do moſt heartily deſpiſe
Whatever Socrates has ſaid,
Or Tully writ, or Wanley read.
Dear Drift *, to ſet our matters right,
Remove theſe papers from my ſight;
Burn Matt's Deſcart and Ariſtotle.
Here, Jonathan, your maſter's bottle.

* Adrian Drift, Eſq. Mr. Prior's ſecretary and executor.

THE NUT-BROWN MAID.

A POEM.

WRITTEN THREE HUNDRED YEARS SINCE.

Be it right or wrong, theſe men among
On women do complayne;
Affyrmynge this, how that it is
A labour ſpent in vaine,
To love them wele; for never a dele
They love a man againe:
For lete a man do what he can,
Ther favour to attayne;
Yet yf a new do them purſue,
Ther furſt trew lover than
Laboureth for nought; for from her thought
He is a baniſhyd man.
I ſay not nay, but that all day
It is bothe writ and ſayde
That woman's fayth is as who ſaythe,
All utterly decayed.
But nevertheleſs right good witneſs
I' this caſe might be layde,
That they love trewe, and continew,
Record the Nut-brown Mayde;
Which from her love (whan her to prove
He came to make his mone)
Wold not depart, for in her herte
She lovyd but him alone.

Than betweene us lettens diſcuſſe,
What was all the maner
Between them too: we wyl alſo
Telle all the peyne and fere
That ſhe was in. Now I begynne,
So that ye me anſwere.
Wherefore all ye that preſent be
I pray ye give an eare.

MAN. I am the knyght, I come by nyght
As ſecret as I can,
Saying, alas! thus ſtandeth the caſe,
I am a baniſhyd man.

WOM. And I your wylle for to fulfylle
In this wyl not refuſe,
Truſting to ſhew, in wordis fewe,
That men have an ille uſe,
(To ther own ſhame) women to blame,
And cauſeleſe them accuſe:
Therefore to you I anſwere now,
Alle women to excuſe.
Myn own herte dere, with you what chere,
I pray you telle anone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. It ſtondeth ſo; a dede is do,
Wherefore moche harm ſhall growe;
My deſteny is for to dey
A ſhameful deth I trowe;

Or ellis to flee: the one muſt be,
None other way I knowe,
But to withdrawe, as an outlawe,
And take me to my bowe.
Wherefore adew, my owne herte trewe,
None other red I can;
For I muſt to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. O Lord! what is this worldis blyſſe,
That chaungeth as the mone?
My ſomer's day, in luſty May,
Is derked before the none.
I here you ſaye farwell: nay, nay,
We departe not ſoo ſone.
Why ſay ye ſo? wheder wyl ye goe?
Alas! what have ye done?
Alle my welfare to ſorrow and care
Shulde chaunge yf ye were gone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. I can beleve it ſhall you greeve,
And ſhomwhat you diſtrayne,
But aftyrwarde your paynes harde,
Within a day or tweyne,
Shal ſone aſlake, and ye ſhal take
Comfort to you agayne.
Why ſhuld ye nought? for to make thought
Your labur were in vayne,

And thus I do, and pray you too,
As hertely as I can;
For I muſte to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. Now ſythe that ye have ſhewed to me
The ſecret of your mynde,
I ſhal be plaine to you againe,
Lyke as ye ſhal me fynde.
Sythe it is ſo that ye wyl goe,
I wol not leve behynde:
Shal never be ſayd the Nut-brown Mayde
Was to her love unkynde.
Make you redy, for ſo am I,
Altho' it were anone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Yet I you rede to take good hede
What men wyl think and ſey;
Of yonge and olde it ſhall be tolde
That ye be gone away:
Your wanton wylle for to fulfylle,
In grene wode you to play;
And that ye myght from your delyte
Noo lenger make delay.
Rather than ye ſhuld thus for me
Be called an ylle woman,
Yet wold I to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. Tho' it be ſonge of olde and yonge
That I ſhuld be to blame,
Thers be the charge that ſpeke ſo large
In hurting of my name:
For I wyll prove that feythful love
It is devoyd of ſhame;
In your diſtreſs and hevyneſs
To parte wyth you the ſame.
And ſure all thoo that doo not ſo,
Trewe lovers are they none;
But in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. I counſel you, remember how
It is noo mayden's lawe
Nothing to dought, but to renne out
To wode with an outlawe:
For ye muſt there in your hand bere
A bowe redy to drawe;
And as a theef, thus muſt ye lyve,
Ever in drede and awe.
Whereby to you gret harme myght growe;
Yet I had lever than
That I had to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. I think not nay; but as ye ſaye,
It is noo mayden's lore;
But love may make me for your ſake,
As I have ſaid before,

To com on fote to hunte and ſhote,
To gete us mete in ſtore:
For ſo that I your company
May have, I aſk noo more:
From whiche to parte, it makith myn herte
As colde as ony ſtone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. For an outlawe, this is the lawe,
That men hym take and binde,
Wythout pytee, hanged to bee,
And waver with the wynde.
Yf I had neede, as God forbede,
What reſons coude ye finde?
For ſothe I trowe, ye and your bowe
Shuld drawe for fere behynde.
And noo merveyle; for lytel avayle
Were in your council than:
Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. Full well knowe ye that women be
But febyl for to fyght:
Noo womanhede it is in deede,
To bee bold as a knyght:
Yet in ſuche fere yf that ye were
With enemys day and nyght,
I wolde withſtonde wyth bowe in honde,
To greve them as I myght;

WOM. Tho' it be ſonge of olde and yonge
That I ſhuld be to blame,
Thers be the charge that ſpeke ſo large
In hurting of my name:
For I wyll prove that feythful love
It is devoyd of ſhame;
In your diſtreſs and hevyneſs
To parte wyth you the ſame.
And ſure all thoo that doo not ſo,
Trewe lovers are they none;
But in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. I counſel you, remember how
It is noo mayden's lawe
Nothing to dought, but to renne out
To wode with an outlawe:
For ye muſt there in your hand bere
A bowe redy to drawe;
And as a theef, thus muſt ye lyve,
Ever in drede and awe.
Whereby to you gret harme myght growe;
Yet I had lever than
That I had to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. I think not nay; but as ye ſaye,
It is noo mayden's lore;
But love may make me for your ſake,
As I have ſaid before,

To com on fote to hunte and ſhote,
To gete us mete in ſtore:
For ſo that I your company
May have, I aſk noo more:
From whiche to parte, it makith myn herte
As colde as ony ſtone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. For an outlawe, this is the lawe,
That men hym take and binde,
Wythout pytee, hanged to bee,
And waver with the wynde.
Yf I had neede, as God forbede,
What reſons coude ye finde?
For ſothe I trowe, ye and your bowe
Shuld drawe for fere behynde.
And noo merveyle; for lytel avayle
Were in your council than:
Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. Full well knowe ye that women be
But febyl for to fyght:
Noo womanhede it is in deede,
To bee bold as a knyght:
Yet in ſuche fere yf that ye were
With enemys day and nyght,
I wolde withſtonde wyth bowe in honde,
To greve them as I myght;

And you to ſave, as women have
From dethe many one;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Yet take gude hede! for ever I drede
That ye coude not ſuſtein
The thorney weyes, the depe valeis,
The ſnowe, the froſt, the reyn;
The cold, the hete: for drye, or wete,
We muſt lodge on the playn,
And us above noon other roſe,
But a brake, buſh, or twayne,
Whiche ſone ſhulde greve you, I beleve;
And ye wolde gladely than,
That I had to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. Sythe I have here been partynere
With you of joy and blyſſe,
I muſt alſo parte of your woo
Endure, as reſon is:
Yet am I ſure of one pleſure,
And, ſhortly, it is this,
That where ye bee, mee ſeemeth, par-dy
I could not fare amyſs.
Without more ſpeche I you beſeche
That we were ſoon a-gone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Yf ye goo thedyr, ye muſt conſyder,
Whan ye have luſt to dyne,
Ther ſhal no mete be for to gete,
Nor drink, bere, ale, ne wine;
Ne ſhetis clene, to lye betwene,
Made of thred and twyne;
Noon other houſe but levys and bowes,
To kever your head and myn.
O myn herte ſwete, this ylle dyet
Shuld make you pale and wan;
Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. Among the wylde dere, ſuch an archier
As men ſay that ye bee,
We may not fayle of good vitayle,
Where is ſo grete plente:
And watir cleere of the ryvere
Shal be full ſwete to me,
With whiche in hele, I ſhal right wele
Endure, as ye ſhal ſee.
And er we goe, a bed or two
I can provide anone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Loo! yet before, ye muſt do more,
Yf ye wyl go with me;
As cute your here up by your ere,
Your kurtel by the knee:

Wyth bowe in honde, for to wythſtonde
Your enemys yf nede be;
And this ſame nyght, before day-lyght,
To wode-ward wyl I flee.
And yf ye wylle al this fulfylle,
Do it ſhortly as ye can;
Ellis wyl I to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. I ſhall as now do more for you
Than longeth to womanhede;
To ſhort my here, a bow to bere,
To ſhote in tyme of nede.
O my ſweet moder, before al other,
For you have I moſt drede;
But now adew, I muſt enſue
Where Fortune duth me lede.
All this make ye, and lete us flee,
The day run faſt upon;
For in my mynde of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Nay, nay, not ſo; ye ſhal not goe,
And I ſhal telle ye why;
Your appetyte is to be light
Of love, I wele eſpie;
For right as ye have ſayde to me
In lykewiſe hardely
Ye wolde anſwere, whoſoever it were,
In way of company.

It is ſayd of olde, Sone hote, ſone colde,
And ſo is a woman;
Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. Yf ye take hede, yt is noo nede
Such wordis to ſay bee me;
For ofte ye preyd, and longe aſſayd,
Er I you lovid, par-dy;
And though that I of aunceſtry
A baron's daughter bee,
Yet have you proved how I you loved,
A ſquyer of low degree;
And ever ſhal, what ſo befalle,
To dey therefore anone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. A baron's childe to be begyled,
It were a curſed dede:
To be felawe with an outlawe,
Almighty God forbede!
Yt bettyr were the pore ſquyer
Alone to forreſt ſpede,
Than ye ſhal ſaye another daye,
That by that wycked dede
Ye were betrayed. Wherefore good mayde,
The beſt rede that I can,
Is that I to the grene wode goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. Whatſoever befalle, I never ſhale
Of this thing you upbraid;
But yf ye go and leve me ſo,
Then have ye me betraid.
Remember yé wele how that ye dele;
For yf ye, as ye ſayde,
Be ſo unkynde to leve behynde
Your love, the Nut-brown Mayde,
Truſt me truely, that I ſhal dey
Sone after ye be gone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Yf that ye went ye ſhulde repent;
For in the forreſt now
I have purveid me of a mayde,
Whom I love more than you.
Another fayrer then e'er ye were,
I dare it well avowe;
And of you bothe eche ſhulde be wrothe
Wyth other, as I trowe,
It were myn eſe to live in peſe,
So wyl I yf I can;
Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,
Alone, a baniſhyd man.

WOM. Tho' in the wode I undirſtode
Ye had a paramour,
All this may nought remove my thought,
But that I will be your:

And ſhe ſhall fynde me ſoft and kynde,
And curteis every hour,
Glad to fulfylle all that ſhe wylle
Commaunde me to my pow'r.
For had ye loo an hundred moo,
Yet wolde I be that one;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Myne own dere love, I ſee the prove,
That ye be kynde and trewe;
Of mayde and wyfe, in al my lyfe,
The beſt that ever I knewe.
Be merey and glad, be no more ſad,
The caſe is chaunged newe;
For it were ruthe, that for your trouth,
Ye ſhulde have cauſe to rewe.
Be not diſmayd whatſoever I ſayd
To you whan I began;
I wyl not to the grene wode goe,
I am no baniſhyd man.

WOM. Theis tydingis be more glad to me,
Than to be made a quene,
Yf I were ſure they ſhulde endure;
But it is often ſeene,
When men wyl breke promyſe, they ſpeke
The wordis on the ſplene.
Ye ſhape ſome wyle, me to begyle,
And ſtele fro me, I wene.

Then were the caſe wurs than it was,
And I more woo begone;
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
I love but you alone.

MAN. Ye ſhal not nede further to drede;
I wyl not diſparage
You. God defend, ſyth you deſcend
Of ſo grete a lynage.
Now underſtande, to Weſtmerlande,
Whiche is my herytage,
I wyl you brynge, and wyth a rynge,
By wey of maryage,
I wyl you take, and lady make,
As ſhortly as I can.
Thus have ye wone an erlie's ſone,
And not a baniſhyd man.

HENRY AND EMMA.

A POEM,

UPON THE MODEL OF

THE NUT-BROWN MAID.

TO CLOE.

THOU, to whoſe eyes I bend, at whoſe command
(Tho' low my voice, tho' artleſs be my hand)
I take the ſprightly reed, and ſing and play,
Careleſs of what the cens'ring world may ſay;
Bright Cloe! object of my conſtant vow,
Wilt thou a while unbend thy ſerious brow?
Wilt thou with pleaſure hear thy lover's ſtrains,
And with one heav'nly ſmile o'erpay his pains?
No longer ſhall the Nut-brown Maid be old,
Tho' ſince her youth three hundred years have roll'd:
At thy deſire ſhe ſhall again be rais'd,
And her reviving charms in laſting verſe be prais'd.
No longer man of woman ſhall complain,
That he may love and not be lov'd again;
That we in vain the fickle ſex purſue,
Who change the conſtant lover for the new.
Whatever has been writ, whatever ſaid
Of female paſſion feign'd, or faith decay'd,
Henceforth ſhall in my verſe refuted ſtand,
Be ſaid to winds, or writ upon the ſand:
And while my notes to future times proclaim
Unconquer'd love and ever-during flame,

O, faireſt of the ſex! be thou my Muſe;
Deign on my work thy influence to diffuſe:
Let me partake the bleſſings I rehearſe,
And grant me, Love, the juſt reward of verſe.

As Beauty's potent queen with ev'ry grace
That once was Emma's has adorn'd thy face,
And as her ſon has to my boſom dealt
That conſtant flame which faithful Henry felt,
O let the ſtory with thy life agree,
Let men once more the bright example ſee;
What Emma was to him be thou to me:
Nor ſend me by thy frown from her I love,
Diſtant and ſad, a baniſh'd man to rove:
But, oh! with pity long entreated crown
My pains and hopes; and when thou ſay'ſt that one
Of all mankind thou lov'ſt, oh! think on me alone.

WHERE beauteous Iſis and her huſband Thame
With mingled waves for ever flow the ſame,
In times of yore an ancient baron liv'd,
Great gifts beſtow'd, and great reſpect receiv'd.

When dreadful Edward with ſucceſsful care
Led his free Britons to the Gallic war,
This Lord had headed his appointed bands,
In firm allegiance to his king's commands,
And (all due honours faithfully diſcharg'd)
Had brought back his paternal coat, enlarg'd
With a new mark, the witneſs of his toil,
And no inglorious part of foreign ſpoil.

From the loud camp retir'd and noiſy court,
In honourable eaſe and rural ſport
The remnant of his days he ſafely paſt,
Nor found they lagg'd too ſlow nor flew too faſt;
He made his wiſh with his eſtate comply,
Joyful to live, yet not afraid to die.

One child he had, a daughter, chaſte and fair,
His age's comfort, and his fortune's heir:
They call'd her Emma, for the beauteous dame
Who gave the virgin birth had borne the name;
The name th' indulgent father doubly lov'd,
For in the child the mother's charms improv'd:
Yet as when little round his knees ſhe play'd,
He call'd her oft', in ſport, his Nut-brown Maid,
The friends and tenants took the fondling word,
(As ſtill they pleaſe who imitate their lord)
Uſage confirm'd what Fancy had begun;
The mutual terms around the lands were known,
And Emma and the Nut-brown Maid were one.

As with her ſtature ſtill her charms increas'd,
Thro' all the iſle her beauty was confeſs'd.
Oh! what perfections muſt that virgin ſhare,
Who faireſt is eſteem'd where all are fair?
From diſtant ſhires repair the noble youth,
And find report for once had leſſen'd truth.
By wonder firſt, and then by paſſion mov'd,
They came; they ſaw; they marvell'd; and they lov'd.
By public praiſes and by ſecret ſighs
Each own'd the general power of Emma's eyes.

In tilts and tournaments the valiant ſtrove,
By glorious deeds, to purchaſe Emma's love.
In gentle verſe the witty told their flame,
And grac'd their choiceſt ſongs with Emma's name.
In vain they combated, in vain they writ,
Uſeleſs their ſtrength, and impotent their wit:
Great Venus only muſt direct the dart,
Which elſe will never reach the fair one's heart,
Spite of th'attempts of Force and ſoft effects of Art:
Great Venus muſt prefer the happy one;
In Henry's cauſe her favour muſt be ſhown,
And Emma, of mankind, muſt love but him alone.

While theſe in public to the caſtle came,
And by their gradeur juſtify'd their flame,
More ſecret ways the careful Henry takes;
His 'ſquires, his arms, and equipage forſakes.
In borrow'd name and falſe attire array'd,
Oft' he finds means to ſee the beauteous maid.

When Emma hunts, in huntſman's habit dreſt,
Henry on foot purſues the bounding beaſt;
In his right hand his beachen pole he bears,
And graceful at his ſide his horn he wears.
Still to the glade where ſhe has bent her way,
With knowing ſkill he drives the future prey;
Bids her decline the hill and ſhun the brake,
And ſhews the path her ſteed may ſafeſt take;
Directs her ſpear to fix the glorious wound,
Pleas'd in his toils to have her triumph crown'd,
And blows her praiſes in no common ſound.

A falc'ner Henry is when Emma hawks;
With her of tarſels and of lures he talks:
Upon his wriſt the tow'ring merlin ſtands,
Practis'd to riſe and ſtoop at her commands:
And when ſuperior now the bird has flown,
And headlong brought the tumbling quarry down,
With humble rev'rence he accoſts the fair,
And with the honour'd feather decks her hair.
Yet ſtill as from the ſportive field ſhe goes,
His down-caſt eye reveals his inward woes;
And by his look and ſorrow is expreſt
A nobler game purſu'd than bird or beaſt.

A ſhepherd now along the plain he roves,
And with his jolly pipe delights the groves.
The neighb'ring ſwains around the ſtranger throng,
Or to admire or emulate his ſong;
While with ſoft ſorrow he renews his lays,
Nor heedful of their envy nor their praiſe:
But ſoon as Emma's eyes adorn the plain,
His notes he raiſes to a nobler ſtrain,
With dutiful reſpect and ſtudious fear,
Leſt any careleſs ſound offend her ear.

A frantic gipſey now the houſe he haunts,
And in wild phraſes ſpeaks diſſembled wants.
With the fond maids in palmiſtry he deals;
They tell the ſecret firſt which he reveals;
Says who ſhall wed, and who ſhall be beguil'd;
What groom ſhall get, and 'ſquire maintain the child;

But when bright Emma would her fortune know,
A ſofter look unbends his op'ning brow:
With trembling awe he gazes on her eye,
And in ſoft accents forms the kind reply,
That ſhe ſhall prove as fortunate as fair,
And Hymen's choiceſt gifts are all reſerv'd for her.
Now oft' had Henry chang'd his ſly diſguiſe,
Unmark'd by all but beauteous Emma's eyes:
Oft' had found means alone to ſee the dame,
And at her feet to breathe his am'rous flame;
And oft' the pangs of abſence to remove
By letters, ſoft interpreters of love;
Till time and induſtry (the mighty two
That bring our wiſhes nearer to our view)
Made him perceive that the inclining fair
Receiv'd his vows with no reluctant ear;
That Venus had confirm'd her equal reign,
And dealt to Emma's heart a ſhare of Henry's pain.
While Cupid ſmil'd, by kind occaſion bleſs'd,
And with the ſecret kept the love increas'd,
The am'rous youth frequents the ſilent groves,
And much he meditates, for much he loves.
He loves, 'tis true, and is belov'd again;
Great are his joys; but will they long remain?
Emma with ſmiles receives his preſent flame,
But, ſmiling, will ſhe ever be the ſame?
Beautiful looks are rul'd by fickle minds,
And ſummer ſeas are turn'd by ſudden winds:

Another love may gain her eaſy youth;
Time changes thought, and Flatt'ry conquers Truth.
O impotent eſtate of human life!
Where hope and fear maintain eternal ſtrife;
Where fleeting joy does laſting doubt inſpire,
And moſt we queſtion what we moſt deſire.
Amongſt thy various gifts, great Heav'n, beſtow
Our cup of love unmix'd; forbear to throw
Bitter ingredients in, nor pall the draught
With nauſeous grief; for our ill-judging thought
Hardly enjoys the pleaſurable taſte,
Or deems it not ſincere, or fears it cannot laſt.
With wiſhes rais'd, with jealouſies oppreſt,
(Alternate tyrants of the human breaſt)
By one great trial he reſolves to prove
The faith of woman and the force of love:
If, ſcanning Emma's virtues, he may find
That beauteous frame incloſe a ſteady mind,
He'll fix his hope, of future joy ſecure,
And live a ſlave to Hymen's happy pow'r;
But if the fair one, as he fears, is frail;
If pois'd aright in Reaſon's equal ſcale,
Light fly her merits, and her faults prevail,
His mind he vows to free from am'rous care,
The latent miſchief from his heart to tear,
Reſume his azure arms, and ſhine again in war.
South of the caſtle, in a verdant glade,
A ſpreading beech extends her friendly ſhade;

Here oft' the nymph his breathing vows had heard;
Here oft' her ſilence had her heart declar'd.
As active Spring awak'd her infant buds,
And genial Life inform'd the verdant woods,
Henry, in knots involving Emma's name,
Had half expreſs'd and half conceal'd his flame
Upon this tree; and as the tender mark
Grew with the year, and widen'd with the bark,
Venus had heard the virgin's ſoft addreſs,
That, as the wound, the paſſion might increaſe.
As potent Nature ſhed her kindly ſhow'rs,
And deck'd the various mead with op'ning flow'rs,
Upon this tree the nymph's obliging care
Had left a frequent wreath for Henry's hair,
Which as with gay delight the lover found,
Pleas'd with his conqueſt, with her preſent crown'd,
Glorious thro' all the plains he oft' had gone,
And to each ſwain the myſtic honour ſhown,
The gift ſtill prais'd, the giver ſtill unknown.

His ſecret note the troubled Henry writes;
To the known tree the lovely maid invites:
Imperfect words and dubious terms expreſs
That unforeſeen miſchance diſturb'd his peace;
That he muſt ſomething to her ear commend,
On which her conduct and his life depend.

Soon as the fair one had the note receiv'd,
The remnant of the day alone ſhe griev'd;
For diff'rent this from ev'ry former note
Which Venus dictated and Henry wrote;

Which told her all his future hopes were laid
On the dear boſom of his Nut-brown Maid;
Which always bleſs'd her eyes, and own'd her pow'r,
And bid her oft' adieu, yet added more.
Now night advanc'd: the houſe in ſleep were laid,
The nurſe experienc'd, and the prying maid;
And, laſt, that ſprite which does inceſſant haunt
The lover's ſteps, the ancient maiden aunt.
To her dear Henry Emma wings her way,
With quicken'd pace repairing forc'd delay:
For Love, fantaſtic pow'r, that is afraid
To ſtir abroad till Watchfulneſs be laid,
Undaunted then o'er cliffs and vallies ſtrays,
And leads his vot'ries ſafe thro' pathleſs ways.
Not Argus with his hundred eyes ſhall find
Where Cupid goes, tho' he, poor guide, is blind.
The maiden firſt arriving, ſent her eye
To aſk if yet its chief delight were nigh:
With fear and with deſire, with joy and pain
She ſees, and runs to meet him on the plain;
But, oh! his ſteps proclaim no lover's haſte;
On the low ground his fix'd regards are caſt;
His artful boſom heaves diſſembled ſighs,
And tears ſuborn'd fall copious from his eyes.
With eaſe, alas! we credit what we love;
His painted grief does real ſorrow move
In the afflicted fair: adown her cheek
Trickling the genuine tears their current break:

Attentive ſtood the mournful nymph: the man
Broke ſilence firſt: the tale alternate ran.
HEN. Sincere, O tell me, haſt thou felt a pain,
Emma, beyond what woman knows to feign?
Has thy uncertain boſom ever ſtrove
With the firſt tumults of a real love?
Haſt thou now dreaded and now bleſt his ſway,
By turns averſe and joyful to obey?
Thy virgin ſoftneſs haſt thou e'er bewail'd,
As reaſon yielded and as love prevail'd?
And wept the potent god's reſiſtleſs dart,
His killing pleaſure, his ecſtatic ſmart,
And heav'nly poiſon thrilling thro' thy heart?
If ſo, with pity view my wretched ſtate,
At leaſt deplore, and then forget my fate:
To ſome more happy knight reſerve thy charms,
By Fortune favour'd and ſucceſsful arms;
And only as the ſun's revolving ray
Brings back each year this melancholy day,
Permit one ſigh, and ſet apart one tear
To an abandon'd exile's endleſs care.
For me, alas! outcaſt of human race,
Love's anger only waits and dire diſgrace;
For, lo! theſe hands in murther are imbru'd,
Theſe trembling feet by Juſtice are purſu'd:
Fate calls aloud, and haſtens me away;
A ſhameful death attends my longer ſtay;
And I this night muſt fly from thee and love,
Condemn'd in lonely woods a baniſh'd man to rove.

EMMA. What is our bliſs that changeth with the moon,
And day of life that darkens ere 'tis noon?
What is true paſſion, if unbleſt it dies?
And where is Emma's joy if Henry flies?
If love, alas! be pain, the pain I bear
No thought can figure, and no tongue declare.
Ne'er faithful woman felt, nor falſe one feign'd
The flames which long have in my boſom reign'd:
The god of Love himſelf inhabits there,
With all his rage, and dread, and grief, and care,
His complement of ſtores and total war.
O! ceaſe then coldly to ſuſpect my love,
And let my deed at leaſt my faith approve.
Alas! no youth ſhall my endearments ſhare,
Nor day nor night ſhall interrupt my care;
No future ſtory ſhall with truth upbraid
The cold indiff'rence of the Nut-brown Maid;
Nor to hard baniſhment ſhall Henry run,
While careleſs Emma ſleeps on beds of down.
View me reſolv'd where'er thou lead'ſt to go,
Friend to thy pain, and partner of thy woe;
For I atteſt fair Venus and her ſon,
That I, of all mankind, will love but thee alone.

HEN. Let prudence yet obſtruct thy vent'rous way,
And take good heed what men will think and ſay;
That beauteous Emma vagrant courſes took,
Her father's houſe and civil life forſook;
That full of youthful blood, and fond of man,
She to the woodland with an exile ran.

Reflect, that leſſen'd fame is ne'er regain'd,
And virgin-honour once, is always ſtain'd:
Timely advis'd, the coming evil ſhun;
Better not do the deed than weep it done:
No penance can abſolve our guilty fame,
Nor tears, that waſh out ſin, can waſh out ſhame:
Then fly the ſad effects of deſp'rate love,
And leave a baniſh'd man thro' lonely woods to rove.

EMMA. Let Emma's hapleſs caſe be falſely told
By the raſh young or the ill-natur'd old;
Let ev'ry tongue its various cenſures chuſe,
Abſolve with coldneſs, or with ſpite accuſe;
Fair Truth at laſt her radiant beams will raiſe,
And Malice vanquiſh'd heightens Virtue's praiſe.
Let then thy favour but indulge my flight,
O! let my preſence make thy travels light,
And potent Venus ſhall exalt my name,
Above the rumours of cenſorious Fame;
Nor from that buſy demon's reſtleſs pow'r
Will ever Emma other grace implore,
Than that this truth ſhould to the world be known,
That I, of all mankind, have lov'd but thee alone.

HEN. But canſt thou wield the ſword and bend the bow?
With active force repel the ſturdy foe?
When the loud tumult ſpeaks the battle nigh,
And winged deaths in whiſtling arrows fly,
Wilt thou, tho' wounded, yet undaunted ſtay,
Perform thy part, and ſhare the dang'rous day?

Then as thy ſtrength decays thy heart will fail,
Thy limbs all trembling and thy cheeks all pale;
With fruitleſs ſorrow thou, inglorious Maid,
Wilt weep thy ſafety by thy love betray'd;
Then to thy friend, by foes o'ercharg'd, deny
Thy little uſeleſs aid, and coward fly;
Then wilt thou curſe the chance that made thee love
A baniſh'd man, condemn'd in lonely woods to rove.

EMMA. With fatal certainty Thaleſtris knew
To ſend the arrow from the twanging yew:
And, great in arms, and foremoſt in the war,
Bonduca brandiſh'd high the Britiſh ſpear.
Could thirſt of vengeance and deſire of fame
Excite the female breaſt with martial flame?
And ſhall not Love's diviner pow'r inſpire
More hardy virtue and more gen'rous fire?

Near thee, miſtruſt not, conſtant I'll abide,
And fall or vanquiſh, fighting by thy ſide.
Tho' my inferior ſtrength may not allow
That I ſhould bear or draw the warrior bow,
With ready hand I will the ſhaft ſupply,
And joy to ſee thy victor arrows fly.
Touch'd in the battle by the hoſtile reed,
Shouldſt thou (but Heav'n avert it!) ſhouldſt thou
To ſtop the wounds my fineſt lawn I'd tear, [bleed,
Waſh them with tears, and wipe them with my hair;
Bleſt when my dangers and my toils have ſhown
That I, of all mankind, could love but thee alone.

HEN. But canſt thou, tender Maid, canſt thou ſuſtain
Afflictive want, or hunger's preſſing pain?
Thoſe limbs, in lawn and ſofteſt ſilk array'd,
From ſunbeams guarded, and of winds afraid,
Can they bear angry Jove? can they reſiſt
The parching Dog-ſtar and the bleak North-eaſt?
When, chill'd by adverſe ſnows and beating rain,
We tread with weary ſteps the longſome plain;
When with hard toil we ſeek our ev'ning food,
Berries and acorns, from the neighb'ring wood,
And find among the cliffs no other houſe
But the thin covert of ſome gather'd boughs,
Wilt thou not then reluctant ſend thine eye
Around the dreary waſte, and weeping try
(Tho' then, alas! that trial be too late)
To find thy father's hoſpitable gate,
And ſeats where Eaſe and Plenty brooding ſate?
Thoſe ſeats whence, long excluded, thou muſt mourn;
That gate for ever barr'd to thy return;
Wilt thou not then bewail ill-fated love,
And hate a baniſh'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove?

EMMA. Thy riſe of fortune did I only wed,
From its decline determin'd to recede;
Did I but purpoſe to embark with thee
On the ſmooth ſurface of a ſummer's ſea,
While gentle zephyrs play in proſp'rous gales,
And Fortune's favour fills the ſwelling ſails,
But would forſake the ſhip and make the ſhore,
When the winds whiſtle and the tempeſts roar?

No, Henry, no: one ſacred oath has ty'd
Our loves; one deſtiny our life ſhall guide,
Nor wild nor deep our common way divide.
When from the cave thou riſeſt with the day,
To beat the woods and rouſe the bounding prey,
The cave with moſs and branches I'll adorn,
And cheerful ſit to wait my lord's return.
And when thou frequent bring'ſt the ſmitten deer,
(For ſeldom, archers ſay, thy arrows err)
I'll fetch quick fuel from the neighb'ring wood,
And ſtrike the ſparkling flint, and dreſs the food:
With humble duty and officious haſte
I'll cull the furtheſt mead for thy repaſt;
The choiceſt herbs I to thy board will bring,
And draw thy water from the freſheſt ſpring:
And when at night, with weary toil oppreſt,
Soft ſlumbers thou enjoy'ſt and wholeſome reſt,
Watchful I'll guard thee, and with midnight pray'r
Weary the gods to keep thee in their care;
And joyous aſk at morn's returning ray
If thou haſt health, and I may bleſs the day.
My thoughts ſhall fix, my lateſt wiſh depend
On thee, guide, guardian, kinſman, father, friend:
By all theſe ſacred names be Henry known
To Emma's heart; and, grateful, let him own
That ſhe, of all mankind, could love but him alone.

HEN. Vainly thou tell'ſt me what the woman's care
Shall in the wildneſs of the wood prepare:
Thou, ere thou goeſt, unhappieſt of thy kind,
Muſt leave the habit and the ſex behind.

No longer ſhall thy comely treſſes break
In flowing ringlets on thy ſnowy neck,
Or ſit behind thy head, an ample round,
In graceful breeds, with various ribbon bound;
No longer ſhall the bodice, aptly lac'd
From thy full boſom to thy ſlender waiſt,
That air and harmony of ſhape expreſs,
Fine by degrees, and beautifully leſs;
Nor ſhall thy lower garments' artful plait,
From thy fair ſide dependent to thy feet,
Arm their chaſte beauties with a modeſt pride,
And double ev'ry charm they ſeek to hide.
Th' ambroſial plenty of thy ſhining hair
Cropt off and loſt, ſcarce lower than thy ear
Shall ſtand uncouth; a horſeman's coat ſhall hide
Thy taper ſhape and comelineſs of ſide;
The ſhort trunk-hoſe ſhall ſhow thy foot and knee
Licentious, and to common eyeſight free;
And with a bolder ſtride and looſer air,
Mingled with men, a man thou muſt appear.
Nor ſolitude, nor gentle peace of mind,
Miſtaken Maid, ſhalt thou in foreſts find:
'Tis long ſince Cynthia and her train were there,
Or guardian gods made innocence their care:
Vagrants and outlaws ſhall offend thy view,
For ſuch muſt be my friends; a hideous crew,
By adverſe fortune mix'd in ſocial ill,
Train'd to aſſault, and diſciplin'd to kill;
Their common loves a lewd abandon'd pack,
The beadle's laſh ſtill flagrant on their back;

By ſloth corrupted, by diſorder fed,
Made bold by want, and proſtitute for bread:
With ſuch muſt Emma hunt the tedious day,
Aſſiſt their violence and divide their prey;
With ſuch ſhe muſt return at ſetting light,
Tho' not partaker, witneſs of their night.
Thy ear, inur'd to charitable ſounds
And pitying love, muſt feel the hateful wounds
Of jeſt obſcene and vulgar ribaldry,
The ill-bred queſtion and the lewd reply;
Brought by long habitude from bad to worſe,
Muſt hear the frequent oath, the direful curſe,
That lateſt weapon of the wretches' war,
And blaſphemy, ſad comrade of deſpair.

Now, Emma, now the laſt reflection make,
What thou wouldſt follow, what thou muſt forſake:
By our ill-omen'd ſtars and adverſe heav'n,
No middle object to thy choice is giv'n:
Or yield thy virtue to attain thy love,
Or leave a baniſh'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove.

EMMA. O grief of heart! that our unhappy fates
Force thee to ſuffer what thy honour hates;
Mix thee amongſt the bad, or make thee run
Too near the paths which Virtue bids thee ſhun.
Yet with her Henry ſtill let Emma go;
With him abhor the vice, but ſhare the woe:
And ſure my little heart can never err
Amidſt the worſt, if Henry ſtill be there.

Our outward act is prompted from within,
And from the ſinner's mind proceeds the ſin:
By her own choice free Virtue is approv'd,
Nor by the force of outward objects mov'd.
Who has aſſay'd no danger gains no praiſe.
In a ſmall iſle, amidſt the wideſt ſeas,
Triumphant Conſtancy has fix'd her ſeat;
In vain the Syrens ſing, the tempeſts beat:
Their flatt'ry ſhe rejects, nor fears their threat.
For thee alone theſe little charms I dreſt,
Condemn'd them or abſolv'd them by thy teſt:
In comely figure rang'd my jewels ſhone,
Or negligently plac'd, for thee alone:
For thee again they ſhall be laid aſide;
The woman, Henry, ſhall put off her pride
For thee: my clothes, my ſex, exchang'd for thee,
I'll mingle with the people's wretched lee;
O line extreme of human infamy!
Wanting the ſciſſors, with theſe hands I'll tear
(If that obſtructs my flight) this load of hair:
Black ſoot or yellow walnut ſhall diſgrace
This little red and white of Emma's face:
Theſe nails with ſcratches ſhall deform my breaſt,
Leſt by my look or colour be expreſt
The mark of ought high-born, or ever better dreſt.
Yet in this commerce, under this diſguiſe,
Let me be grateful ſtill to Henry's eyes;
Loſt to the world, let me to him be known;
My fate I can abſolve if he ſhall own
That, leaving all mankind, I love but him alone.

HEN. O wildeſt thought of an abandon'd mind!
Name, habit, parents, woman, left behind,
Ev'n honour dubious, thou preferr'ſt to go
Wild to the woods with me. Said Emma ſo?
Or did I dream what Emma never ſaid?
O guilty error! and O wretched Maid!
Whoſe roving fancy would reſolve the ſame
With him who next ſhould tempt her eaſy fame,
And blow with empty words the ſuſceptible flame.
Now why ſhould doubtful terms thy mind perplex?
Confeſs thy frailty and avow the ſex:
No longer looſe deſire for conſtant love [rove.
Miſtake, but ſay, 'tis man with whom thou long'ſt to
EMMA. Are there not poiſons, racks, and flames, and
That Emma thus muſt die by Henry's words? [ſwords,
Yet what could ſwords or poiſon, racks or flame,
But mangle and disjoint this brittle frame! [fame.
More fatal Henry's words, they murder Emma's
And fall theſe ſayings from that gentle tongue,
Were civil ſpeech and ſoft perſuaſion hung?
Whoſe artful ſweetneſs and harmonious ſtrain,
Courting my grace, yet courting it in vain,
Call'd ſighs, and tears, and wiſhes, to its aid,
And, whilſt it Henry's glowing flame convey'd,
Still blam'd the coldneſs of the Nut-brown Maid?
Let envious Jealouſy and canker'd Spite
Produce my actions to ſevereſt light,
And tax my open day or ſecret night.
Did e'er my tongue ſpeak my unguarded heart
The leaſt inclin'd to play the wanton's part?

Did e'er my eye one inward thought reveal,
Which angels might not hear and virgins tell?
And haſt thou, Henry, in my conduct known
One fault but that which I muſt ever own,
That I, of all mankind, have lov'd but thee alone?

HEN. Vainly thou talk'ſt of loving me alone;
Each man is man, and all our ſex is one:
Falſe are our words, and fickle is our mind;
Nor in Love's ritual can we ever find
Vows made to laſt, or promiſes to bind.
By Nature prompted, and for empire made,
Alike by ſtrength or cunning we invade:
When arm'd with rage we march againſt the foe,
We lift the battle-axe and draw the bow;
When fir'd with paſſion we attack the fair,
Deluſive ſighs and brittle vows we bear;
Our falſehood and our arms have equal uſe,
As they our conqueſt or delight produce.
The fooliſh heart thou gav'ſt again receive,
The only boon departing Love can give.
To be leſs wretched be no longer true;
What ſtrives to fly thee, why ſhouldſt thou purſue?
Forget the preſent flame, indulge a new:
Single the loveliеſt of the am'rous youth;
Aſk for his vow, but hope not for his truth.
The next man (and the next thou ſhalt believe)
Will pawn his gods, intending to deceive;
Will kneel, implore, perſiſt, o'ercome, and leave.

Hence let thy Cupid aim his arrows right;
Be wiſe and falſe, ſhun trouble, ſeek delight;
Change thou the firſt, nor wait thy lover's flight.

Why ſhouldſt thou weep? let Nature judge our caſe;
I ſaw thee young and fair; purſu'd the chaſe
Of youth and beauty: I another ſaw
Fairer and younger: yielding to the law
Of our all-ruling Mother, I purſu'd
More youth, more beauty. Bleſt viciſſitude!
My active heart ſtill keeps its priſtine flame,
The object alter'd, the deſire the ſame.

This younger, fairer, pleads her rightful charms,
With preſent power compels me to her arms;
And much I fear from my ſubjected mind,
(If beauty's force to conſtant love can bind)
That years may roll ere in her turn the maid
Shall weep the fury of my love decay'd,
And weeping follow me, as thou doſt now,
With idle clamours of a broken vow.

Nor can the wildneſs of thy wiſhes err
So wide to hope that thou may'ſt live with her:
Love, well thou know'ſt, no partnerſhip allows;
Cupid averſe, rejects divided vows:
Then from thy fooliſh heart, vain Maid, remove
An uſeleſs ſorrow and an ill-ſtarr'd love,
And leave me, with the fair, at large in woods to rove.

EMMA. Are we in life thro' one great error led?
Is each man perjur'd, and each nymph betray'd?
Of the ſuperior ſex art thou the worſt?
Am I of mine the moſt completely curſt?

Yet let me go with thee, and going prove,
From what I will endure, how much I love.
This potent beauty, this triumphant fair,
This happy object of our diff'rent care,
Her let me follow; her let me attend,
A ſervant; (ſhe may ſcorn the name of friend)
What ſhe demands inceſſant I'll prepare;
I'll weave her garlands, and I'll plait her hair:
My buſy diligence ſhall deck her board,
(For there, at leaſt, I may approach my lord)
And when her Henry's ſofter hours adviſe
His ſervant's abſence, with dejected eyes
Far I'll recede, and ſighs forbid to riſe.
Yet when increaſing grief brings ſlow diſeaſe,
And ebbing life, on terms ſevere as theſe,
Will have its little lamp no longer fed;
When Henry's miſtreſs ſhows him Emma dead,
Reſcue my poor remains from vile neglect:
With virgin honours let my herſe be deckt,
And decent emblem; and, at leaſt, perſuade
This happy nymph that Emma may be laid
Where thou, dear author of my death, where ſhe
With frequent eye my ſepulchre may ſee.
The nymph, amidſt her joys, may haply breathe
One pious ſigh, reflecting on my death,
And the ſad fate which ſhe may one day prove,
Who hopes from Henry's vows eternal love.
And thou foreſworn, thou cruel, as thou art,
If Emma's image ever touch'd thy heart,

Thou ſure muſt give one thought, and drop one tear
To her whom love abandon'd to deſpair;
To her who, dying, on the wounded ſtone
Bid it in laſting characters be known
That, of mankind, ſhe lov'd but thee alone.

HEN. Hear, ſolemn Jove, and, conſcious Venus hear;
And thou, bright Maid, believe me whilſt I ſwear;
No time, no change, no future flame, ſhall move
The well-plac'd baſis of my laſting love.
O powerful Virtue! O victorious Fair!
At leaſt excuſe a trial too ſevere;
Receive the triumph, and forget the war.

No baniſh'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove,
Entreats thy pardon, and implores thy love:
No perjur'd knight deſires to quit thy arms,
Faireſt collection of thy ſex's charms,
Crown of my love, and honour of my youth;
Henry, thy Henry, with eternal truth,
As thou may'ſt wiſh, ſhall all his life employ,
And found his glory, in his Emma's joy.

In me behold the potent Edgar's heir,
Illuſtrious earl: him terrible in war,
Let Loyre confeſs, for ſhe has felt his ſword,
And trembling fled before the Britiſh lord.
Him great in peace and wealth fair Deva knows,
For ſhe amidſt his ſpacious meadows flows,
Inclines her urn upon his fatten'd lands,
And ſees his num'rous herds imprint her ſands.

And thou, my Fair, my Dove, ſhalt raiſe thy thought
To greatneſs next to empire; ſhalt be brought

With ſolemn pomp to my paternal ſeat,
Where peace and plenty on thy word ſhall wait:
Muſic and ſong ſhall wake the marriage-day,
And while the prieſts accuſe the bride's delay,
Myrtles and roſes ſhall obſtruct her way.

Friendſhip ſhall ſtill thy ev'ning feaſts adorn,
And blooming Peace ſhall ever bleſs thy morn;
Succeeding years their happy race ſhall run,
And Age unheeded by delight come on,
While yet ſuperior love ſhall mock his pow'r;
And when old Time ſhall turn the fated hour,
Which only can our well-ty'd knot unfold,
What reſts of both one ſepulchre ſhall hold.

Hence, then, for ever, from my Emma's breaſt
(That heav'n of ſoftneſs, and that ſeat of reſt)
Ye doubts and fears, and all that know to move
Tormenting grief, and all that trouble love;
Scatter'd by winds recede, and wild in foreſts rove.

EMMA. O day! the faireſt ſure that ever roſe!
Period and end of anxious Emma's woes!
Sire of her joy, and ſource of her delight;
O! wing'd with pleaſure take thy happy flight,
And give each future morn a tincture of thy white.
Yet tell thy vot'ry, potent queen of Love,
Henry, my Henry, will he never rove?
Will he be ever kind, and juſt, and good?
And is there yet no miſtreſs in the wood?
None, none there is: the thought was raſh and vain,
A falſe idea, and a fancy'd pain.

Doubt ſhall for ever quit my ſtrengthen'd heart,
And anxious Jealouſy's corroding ſmart;
Nor other inmate ſhall inhabit there,
But ſoft Belief, young Joy, and pleaſing Care.
Hence let the tides of plenty ebb and flow,
And Fortune's various gale unheeded blow.
If at my feet the ſuppliant goddeſs ſtands,
And ſheds her treaſure with unweary'd hands,
Her preſent favour cautious I'll embrace,
And not unthankful uſe the proffer'd grace,
If ſhe reclaims the temporary boon,
And tries her pinions, flutt'ring to be gone,
Secure of mind I'll obviate her intent,
And unconcern'd return the goods ſhe lent.
Nor happineſs can I, nor miſery, feel,
From any turn of her fantaſtic wheel:
Friendſhip's great laws, and Love's ſuperior pow'rs
Muſt mark the colour of my future hours.
From the events which thy commands create
I muſt my bleſſings or my ſorrows date,
And Henry's will muſt dictate Emma's fate.
Yet while with cloſe delight and inward pride
(Which from the world my careful ſoul ſhall hide)
I ſee thee, lord and end of my deſire,
Exalted high as virtue can require,
With pow'r inveſted, and with pleaſure cheer'd,
Sought by the good, by the oppreſſor fear'd,
Loaded and bleſt with all the affluent ſtore
Which human vows at ſmoking ſhrines implore;

Grateful and humble grant me to employ
My life ſubſervient only to thy joy,
And at my death to bleſs thy kindneſs, ſhown
To her who, of mankind, could love but thee alone.

While thus the conſtant pair alternate ſaid,
Joyful above them and around them play'd
Angels and ſportive Loves, a num'rous crowd;
Smiling they clapt their wings, and low they bow'd:
They tumbled all their little quivers o'er,
To chuſe propitious ſhafts a precious ſtore,
That when their god ſhould take his future darts,
To ſtrike (however rarely) conſtant hearts,
His happy ſkill might proper arms employ,
All tipt with pleaſure, and all wing'd with joy;
And thoſe, they vow'd, whoſe lives ſhould imitate
Theſe lovers' conſtancy, ſhould ſhare their fate.
The queen of Beauty ſtopp'd her bridled doves,
Approv'd the little labour of the Loves;
Was proud and pleas'd the mutual vow to hear,
And to the triumph call'd the god of War:
Soon as ſhe calls, the god is always near.
Now Mars, ſhe ſaid, let Fame exalt her voice,
Nor let thy conqueſts only be her choice,
But when ſhe ſings great Edward from the field
Return'd, the hoſtile ſpear and captive ſhield
In Concord's temple hung, and Gallia taught to yield.
And when, as prudent Saturn ſhall complete
The years deſign'd to perfect Britain's ſtate,

The ſwift-wing'd Power ſhall take her trump again,
To ſing her fav'rite Anna's wondrous reign,
To recollect unweary'd Marlbrô's toils,
Old Rufus' Hall unequal to his ſpoils,
The Britiſh ſoldier from his high command
Glorious, and Gaul thrice vanquiſh'd by his hand,
Let her at leaſt perform what I deſire,
With ſecond breath the vocal braſs inſpire,
And tell the nations in no vulgar ſtrain,
What wars I manage and what wreaths I gain.
And when thy tumults and thy fights are paſt,
And when thy laurels at my feet are caſt;
Faithful may'ſt thou, like Britiſh Henry prove,
And Emma-like let me return thy love.
Renown'd for truth let all thy ſons appear,
And conſtant beauty ſhall reward their care.
Mars ſmil'd, and bow'd: the Cyprian deity
Turn'd to the glorious ruler of the ſky;
And thou, ſhe ſmiling ſaid, great god of Days
And Verſe, behold my deed and ſing my praiſe;
As on the Britiſh earth, my fav'rite iſle,
Thy gentle rays and kindeſt influence ſmile,
Thro' all her laughing fields and verdant groves,
Proclaim with joy theſe memorable loves:
From ev'ry annual courſe let one great day
To celebrated ſports and floral play
Be ſet aſide; and in the ſofteſt lays
Of thy poetic ſons, be ſolemn praiſe
And everlaſting marks of honour paid
To the true Lover and the Nut-brown Maid.

CONTENTS.

Page

PREFACE to the poem on the vanity of the world, 5

SOLOMON ON THE VANITY OF THE WORLD. IN THREE BOOKS.

Knowledge, Book I. 17
Pleaſure, Book II. 48
Power, Book III. 86

ALMA: OR, THE PROGRESS OF THE MIND. IN THREE CANTOS.

Canto I. 119
Canto II. 138
Canto III. 157
The Nut-brown Maid, a poem. Written three hundred years ſince, 180
Henry and Emma. A poem, upon the model of the Nut-brown Maid, 193

From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
April 28th, 1777.

THE END.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Page
, 5
.
17
48
86
.
119
138
157
e
180
f
193